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250 issues... my, that's a lot of paper! It's also a very good reason to celebrate the world's greatest Science Fiction magazine, as we look back at some of the celebrities we have met, some of the classic SF movies that have graced our pages over the last 20 years... and we also check out some Things to Come That Didn't!

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It's been a troubled first season behind the camera, but finally *Crusade* is launching on TNT for 13 episodes. Gary Cole, who plays Captain Gideon of the starship Excalibur, prepares *Starburst* readers for the voyage ahead.

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Yus it's back - *Sliders* have been some changes! The *Sliders* emerge through the wormhole for their fifth seas... without two of their number. Executive producer Bill Dial lifts us on the new regular characters, and previews the upcoming episodes.

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The Outer Limits celebrates its 100th episode with a thought-provoking tale involving Time travel and the Holocaust. *Starburst* spoke to the producers, writer and cast behind this certain classic...

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Director Peter Jackson provides a tantalizing glimpse of his forthcoming project: the eagerly-awaited movie adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. We don't wait!



Editorial

What a great time to reach *Starburst* 250! Two decades ago we launched alongside the release of *Star Wars: A New Hope*; in 1999 our celebration issue is published as we prepare for the premiere of *The Phantom Menace*. And it's going to be a great year for Science Fiction. I'm still reeling from seeing *The Matrix* (twice), which – for me – was everything the genre should be. Intelligent, provocative, dynamic, original and a stunning attack on the senses. No doubt about it; this is a fantastic time to be a Science Fiction fan – and a great time to be a *Starburst* reader!

David

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Your essential round-up of the latest news from the world of Sci-Fi entertainment here and abroad. Including: the latest on *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*, trouble for *Heracles* and *The Matrix* becomes the biggest SF hit of the year so far! Plus a special preview of the spooky remake *The Haunting*.

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STARBURST

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THINGS TO COME

by
IAN CALCUTT

Lines of the Force

By the time you read the next *Things to Come*, *Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace* will have debuted in the US. This is a unique film phenomenon in many ways, not least because of director George Lucas's total control over the project. Distributors Fox will reportedly not see the film until a few days before release and neither has there been any of the test screenings with random audience members selected from the street.

Instead, Lucas has hand-picked his closest film-making friends, Steven Spielberg, Ron Howard, Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Brian De Palma, Frank Darabont and Lawrence Kasdan, to offer advice and input on the movie. Lucas told *USA Today*, "They're friends whom I trust and, quite frankly, they were blown away." There were some suggestions, however, and Lucas will tinker with the editing right up to delivery of the final negative.

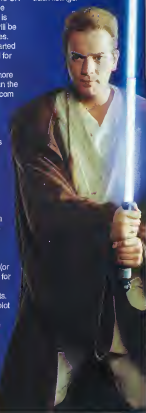
Eleven North American cities get to see *The Phantom Menace* first in a series of charity premieres, though tickets cost \$500 each. The UK premiere, on July 14 at the Odeon Leicester Square, is also a charity affair and will be attended by Prince Charles.

In the US some fans started queuing six weeks ahead for the first public showing! Admittedly, a few of the more enterprising ones (who run the slick www.countingdown.com website) are being sponsored for charity and were granted permission to camp out on the pavement outside Mann's Chinese cinema in LA. The site carries live updates of 'the line'.

If any Brits want to join the queue, UK tour company Sports Mondial is offering special New York flight/hotel (but not cinema ticket) packages for those wishing to hop across the pond to see it early. Reserved bookings for *Star Wars* have been banned (or at least heavily restricted) for the first two weeks of US release to deter ticket bots.

Fans wishing to avoid plot 'spoilers' altogether will have a much harder time from May. The 352-page *Phantom Menace* novelization by Terry Brooks will be on sale from May 3 and even the CD of John Williams's eagerly-anticipated new

score (on sale from May 3 in the UK and a day later in the US) contains a pretty big spoiler in the track listings!



The DS9 crew

Spaced Out

Details are creeping out on the last ever *Deep Space Nine* episode, *What You Leave Behind*. Contrary to much-repeated rumours, the Enterprise-E is not scheduled to appear, and neither do Spock, Gowron, Section 31's Sloane or a scene involving the destruction of DS9 itself.

Some who've read the script are drawing parallels with *Babylon 5*'s finale, *Sleeping in Light*, and also the mystical elements of DSN's pilot, *Emissary*. There are parts for all of the regulars and most of the occasional characters, including Cassidy Yates, Nog, Keiko, Molly, Garak, Weyoun, Vic Fontaine, Dukat, Kai Winn, Morn and Sarah Sisko.

In related news, *Deep Space Nine* regular and Re-Animator star Jeffrey Combs has landed a role in the remake of *The House on Haunted Hill*.

Computer Bugs!

A computer-animated TV series of *Starship Troopers* is in development by Sony for



America's WB network, with Foundation Imaging (Babylon 5 and Star Trek: Voyager) producing the CGL. The 40-part series unfolds a story arc that will run through to the final episode. It shares elements with both the original book by Verhoeven's film (though it will presumably be less gory). Elements from the book made possible in this all-CGL version include the fabled Power Armour. At least one of the movie actors is expected to provide their voice - Clancy Brown (Sgt Zim).

Raider's Rapid Load

The long-mooted movie version of Tomb Raider is finally going ahead at Paramount. The start order was given in April after Die Hard and Street Fighter writer Steven de Souza submitted a draft that execs considered ready for filming (various other writers had been taking a shot at adapting the hit video game). Despite much speculation, there's still no cast yet, including the all-important Lara Croft, but a director has



Out-of-court settlement by Sony

We could be Heroes

The *Hollywood Reporter* states that David Koepf has been hired by Columbia Pictures to script its new Spider-Man movie, based in part on an existing treatment by James Cameron (who will not be involved any further in the film). Koepf's credits include Brian De Palma's *Mission: Impossible*, *Death Becomes Her* and the two *Jurassic Park* films.

Cameron's attention is currently on his *Dark Angel* TV pilot about a genetically-enhanced human in the 21st century who escapes from her military commanders and goes on the run. Jessica Alba (of the recent movie *Never Been Kissed* and the Horror comedy *Idle Hands*) has been cast as the lead, Max.

Bill and Ted and *Men in Black* screenwriter Ed Solomon is writing and directing a TV pilot for Fox called *The Unbelievables*. This light-hearted adventure features a group of retired superheroes (and their younger superhero offspring) who, in the pilot, encounter an arch villain (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*'s Tim Curry) running a coffee and

julce shop in the small town they've just moved to.

There's turmoil in Gotham City as Warners called off voice recording in preparation for a new feature-length animated *Batman* production. The studio changed its mind and ordered it to be derived from the newer *Batman Beyond* series rather than the initial, more traditional *Batman* that won acclaim over the years. The original storyline was to feature The Joker and Bane who escape from Arkham Asylum to get revenge on Batman just as Bruce Wayne is involved in a serious romance and considering retirement. Long-time *Batman* writer Paul Dini and

producer Bruce Timm remain attached to the new version, which should come out later in 2000.

Still in superhero-land, *The X-Men* movie is still moving ahead with reliable rumours naming Ian McKellen as one actor who may get to relish the part of the evil Magneto. McKellen has already played a villainous role for *X-Men* director Bryan Singer in *Apt Pupil*. At a time of rising industry costs, *The X-Men*'s budget is being pinned down to around \$85m (from an initial level of over \$100m) by 20th Century Fox.



been assigned: he's Stephen Herek of *Critters* and *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.

Spy Catcher

Months of court activity have ended with Sony Pictures

surrendering any claim to James Bond. It had made a deal with Thunderball collaborator Kevin McClory who claims his participation gives him shared rights to the 007 character. Current Bond-studio MGM sued but Sony made an out-of-court settlement just as the case was going to full trial.

Sony paid \$5m to settle the outstanding claims but, as part of the process, sold MGM rights it held to the only other available Bond title, *Casino Royale*, for \$10m. Sony may have lost sight of its super-agent dream but at least it wasn't out of pocket for trying.

McClory, however, intends to continue alone and is now even in dispute with Sony over the legal settlement (he alleges he was not informed of the studio's intention).

Ghosts in the Darkness

Whoopi Goldberg (*Ghost*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*) and the prolific Bridget Fonda (*Single White Female*, *Frankenstein Unbound*, *Army of Darkness*, *A Simple Plan*, *Lake Placid*) have joined the live-action cast of Henry Selick's partly-animated *Fantasy Monkey Bone*.

Starring Brendan Fraser as a cartoonist in a coma, Fonda is to play his girlfriend - and the one who notices that he has become possessed with one of his cartoon characters, *Monkey Bone*, from the netherworld of *Dark Town*. Back in that strange, 3-D animated realm, the soul of the cartoonist fights it out with *Death* (Goldberg).



Mastermind

Michael McKean (This Is Spinal Tap, The X-Files' Dreamland, and much more) is to star in a pilot Horror-comedy anthology series from the Henson Co called **Masters of Horror and Suspense**. He plays an author called Will Masters whose family life inspires his writing.

McKean has a guest role in a new **Simpsons** episode, while the last show of this season (don't worry, it'll be back) has a cameo by **Star Trek's** George Takei – prompted by the Simpsons travelling to Tokyo. Coincidentally, Takei's former screen captain, William Shatner, guests in the season finale of **3rd Rock From the Sun**, filling out the physical presence of the aliens' boss, The Big Giant Head.

Futurama's Future

Matt Groening's SF animation **Futurama** has been picked up for a full second season of 22 episodes after it was judged a big enough ratings success on the US Fox network. There was some controversy over it being moved from a prime position between Groening's own **Simpsons** and **The X-Files** to a less popular Tuesday slot. However, its audience has remained solid despite the rescheduling. The first season runs for 13 episodes.

Journey's End for Herc?

It looks like Kevin Sorbo is consigning **Hercules: The Legendary Journeys** to the heavens. The star of the series, which has been running since 1995 (earlier if you count the TV movies), will only make eight more episodes. "I'm actively pursuing more work now," he told the *New York Daily News*. "I'm 90.9 percent sure the show is over, which is sad." Sorbo is reportedly in dispute with the studio over money issues. It's unlikely that Herc will be killed off but "a great finale" is planned.

Hercules spin-off Xena: Warrior Princess, whose popularity now exceeds the original, is going through its own tribulations. The producers have bowed to pressure from Hindu protesters over the episode, *The Way* (see last issue) and have withdrawn it from distribution. The episode, featuring Hindu deities, caused offence on its first US airing and will not be repeated or shown overseas (though it may be re-edited).

That controversy out of the way, the producers now have to face a new challenge. Star Lucy Lawless and husband (Xena ex-husband Robert Tapert) announced in April that they are having a baby. Lawless is due to give birth in October which is during the show's

hiatus but, nevertheless, for the coming episodes the writers will either have to write in the pregnancy or, as with *Scully* in **The X-Files**, Torres in **Star Trek: Voyager** and now **Lili Marquette** in **Earth: Final Conflict**, shoot around it – very hard, one would imagine, given the action-packed nature of the show and Xena's tight-fitting costume.

Playing Merry Hell

Also seeking to dodge religious controversy is Miramax which has sought to protect its parent company, Disney, from flak by putting all distribution rights to Kevin Smith's **Dogma** up for sale. While some have criticized Miramax for 'botching out' and selling-off the film so quickly, it does at least mean that the film should not be re-edited or compromised (ie by a limited release and little publicity).

Smith, who came to prominence with his cult hits **Clerks** and **Chasing Amy** and wrote the unused draft to the new **Superman** project, is a practising Catholic blessed (or cursed?) with a wildly satirical sense of humour. **Dogma** stars Ben Affleck, Matt Damon and Linda Fiorentino in a gag-filled tale of angels at war with demons on Earth as the Apocalypse approaches.



'Sorbo is reportedly in dispute with the studio over money issues'

Rocket to Mars

MouseHunt director Gore Verbinski – who recently left **Mission to Mars** and was replaced by Brian De Palma – has a new project already which sees him going from a small rodent to giant monsters. The film is **Where the Wild Things Are**, based on Maurice Sendak's children's book. Its story is about a boy who uncovers a secret land

Inhabited by huge friendly creatures. It's to be a large-scale production involving live-action and computer-generated FX. Tom Hanks is one of the producers.

Meanwhile, **Mission to Mars** looks like topping \$120m in costs due to its **Armageddon**-style special effects. Star Gary Sinise is now joined by Tim Robbins and Don Cheadle

(**Boogie Nights**, **Out of Sight**). Like **Armageddon**, the film also has a similarly-themed rival. **Mars** is a \$60m thriller to be shot in Australia. There's no cast yet, though Ben Affleck has been offered the lead.

Warner Bros wants to hurry the film out before the Disney-produced **Mission** (a summer 2000 release). **Mars** concerns a similarly doomed excursion to the Red Planet, but in this story an astronaut is left stranded after all his colleagues die one

by one. He must liaise with a female astronaut orbiting the planet to help him survive. **Mars'** director is ex-commercials maker Anthony Hoffman.



Hanks producing



Sam Neill goes futuristic

Neill Eyes Robot

Genre regular Sam Neill is to co-star in the futuristic Robin Williams vehicle *Bicentennial Man* playing the father of a family that hires an android (Williams) who wants to become human. The expensive production's future has been safeguarded now that Disney is to split its costs on the film with Columbia. Development was halted temporarily last year over budget concerns. There's another famous Williams now involved, *Star Wars* composer John Williams. *Bicentennial Man* débuts in July 2000.

The Call of Duty

Glen Morgan and James Wong (*The X-Files*, *Space: Above and Beyond*, *Millennium*) are

back in their old Vancouver haunt to shoot two projects. First is a pilot for Fox called *The Wonder Cabinet* (starring SCAAB's James Morrison) which deals with a team of doctors investigating medical anomalies; then there's *Flight 180*, a feature film about a student (Idle Hands' Devon Sawa) who persuades his friends not to take a flight because he (correctly) predicts it will crash, but somehow the group start to die anyway. The project is Wong's feature-directing debut.

Endless Love

An out-of-print book by SF master Isaac Asimov may be turned into a film by Ridley Scott. *The End of Eternity* is a Time-travelling love story set in a future when a race known as the Eternals control all aspects of Time and humanity's fate.

When an Eternal breaks the rules and falls in love with a non-Eternal, he attempts to change Time in his favour so he can express his feelings. The 1955 tale is being adapted



Ridley Scott tries Time travel?

Lecter's Third Helping

It's taken 10 years but the sudden appearance of *Hannibal*, the long-awaited follow-up novel to *The Silence of the Lambs* by author Thomas Harris, surprised the literary trade. It has been so long in preparation that many had forgotten about it; however, a 600-page manuscript arrived at Harris's agent and publisher's offices in late March. It will sprint into print and may appear as early as June. The author's agent, Mort Janklow told *Variety*, "Thomas always said, when it's perfect, it'll be ready, and sure enough there isn't even a comma that needs to be changed."

The third book to feature Hannibal Lecter has already started talk about film rights. Screen-rights to the Lecter character reside with Dino De Laurentiis who produced Michael Mann's superior *Manhunter* from Harris's *Red Dragon* (Brian Cox



played the cannibal killer with subtle aplomb).

The Silence of the Lambs introduced Clarice Starling — who also features in the new book — and film rights lie with MGM who in turn purchased them from Orion who ran into financial difficulty after making the Oscar-winning *Lambs* film. Whatever happens, it's likely that the *Lambs* team of stars Jodie Foster, Anthony Hopkins and director Jonathan Demme will all be back.

by Total Recall scriptwriter Gary Goldman.

Starry-Eyed

SF parody *Galaxy Quest* (see recent issues) is now to be directed by Dean Parisot who

recently made the Drew Barrymore comedy *Home Fries* and was behind the under-rated TV series *Bakersfield PD*.

Galaxy Quest is to star *Toy Story*'s Tim Allen, *Alien* and *Ghostbusters*' Sigourney Weaver and *Die Hard* and *Robin Hood*'s Alan Rickman. The movie is about imperiled aliens seeking saviours but who recruit the cast of a famous TV show (which may or may not resemble *Star Trek*) thinking them to be the real thing.

Matrix Moulds a Megahit

The Matrix has generated massive earnings in the US — over \$37m in its first five days and a total of \$100m after three weeks (the biggest hit of the year to date). There's already talk of sequels, which is lucky as its writer-directors — Andy and Larry Wachowski — envisioned their complex, alternate-reality premise as spanning three movies. The hit has also put the sibling directors (whose previous film was the excellent *Bound*) in great demand. One of their earlier scripts, *Carnivore*, has already been dusted off for director George Romero to rush before the cameras

in the autumn — before, it seems, his much-heralded *Resident Evil*. *Carnivore* is a gothic horror allegory set in a boarding house where the rich residents disappear under mysterious circumstances and, as the title implies, the food tastes rather odd.

The Wachowski brothers are also being linked to a movie version of the comic book *V for Vendetta*, which they were developing prior to producing *The Matrix*.



Reeves: Back with a vengeance



Alan Rickman to star in *Galaxy Quest*



Craven in print

Affluent Society

The ever-productive Wes Craven has just completed his first novel, *The Fountain Society*, and immediately sold the film rights to DreamWorks for \$1m. Craven is attached to direct the movie version early next year after he completes *Scream 3*. *The Fountain Society* is about a weapons scientist dying of cancer who is offered the chance to take part in a government genetics experiment involving cloning and the search for the fountain of youth.

Now You See It...

Josh Brolin (*Mimic*, *Nightwatch*) is in line to join Kevin Bacon and Elisabeth Shue in Paul Verhoeven's epic, *The Hollow Man*. He would play Shue's current beau – and the object of Bacon's jealousy.

While *Hollow Man* sounds great, let's hope the invisibility fad doesn't get out of hand. Miramax has recently bought remake rights to the classic comedy-Fantasy *Harvey* – in which James Stewart claims to be accompanied by a six-foot

News in Brief

The big-screen version of *Casper*, which has already spawned two related direct-to-video movies, is to get a fully-fledged sequel to be released in cinemas. Ruling over the new film will be Simon Wells, co-director of *The Prince of Egypt*. This will be his first (mostly) live-action project.

Staying with vampires, the dramatized making-of-*Nosferatu* project called *Shadow of the Vampire* has been renamed *Burned to Light*. Willem Dafoe (*Wild at Heart*, *eXistenZ*) portrays the sinewy actor Max Schreck. It's not Dafoe's first vampire outing – he appeared in 1983's *The Hunger*.

Malcolm McDowell (*A Clockwork Orange*, *Star Trek: Generations*) will play a wizard in *The Visitors*, an English-language remake of the Time travel comedy *Les Visiteurs* to be shot in the UK and Chicago. Christina Applegate (*Mars Attacks!*) also appears, while original stars Jean Reno and Christian Clavier reprise their roles.

Disney's forthcoming *Fantasia 2000*, a reprise of its animated musical milestone, is to be released in the large-screen Imax format, as well

as in 'regular' size. The film premieres in New York in December and will be released around the world, in both forms, from January 2000.

BAFTA came through where the American Academy failed miserably and awarded *The Truman Show* three well-deserved awards in its April 11 ceremony. Peter Weir beat the favourite, Steven Spielberg, to win Best Director and Andrew Niccol was awarded Best Original Screenplay. The movie also won for Best Production Design.

BT Phone Home

The *ET* revival continues and this time it's the UK's turn. After a road safety campaign and stamp appearance in the US, Spielberg's extraterrestrial has made it into a series of British Telecom print and TV ads, or at least his famous long-fingered hand has.



McDowell and Reno team up in *The Visitors*

rabbit visible only to him. There are few actors who could do this justice – at best: Tom Hanks, Jim Carrey or, at worst, Adam Sandler. All have been suggested as possible stars, but please, let this idea, erm, disappear altogether...

Cat-Call

A second remake of *Cat People* is in development at Will Smith's production company. No cast or director are assigned yet but screenwriter Rafael Moreu (*The Rage*; *Carrie 2*) is

preparing the new script. Jacques Tourneur's incredibly moody 1942 chiller starring Simone Simon was hardly bettered by Paul Schrader's sexed-up sledgehammer version in 1982 with Nastassja Kinski.

Obituaries

The death of Stanley Kubrick overshadowed everything last month, so here's a round-up of others whose passing shouldn't go ignored:

Actor/composer Anthony Newley (who died of cancer on April 14 aged 67). He played Matthew Mugg in 1967's *Doctor Doolittle* and composed *Willy Wonka* and the *Chocolate Factory*'s score

and Shirley Bassey's *Goldfinger* theme.

Sean Vander Pyl (California, April 10, of lung cancer, aged 79) – voice artist on *The Flintstones* and of seven roles on *The Jetsons*.

Veteran stuntman Gil Perkins (Hollywood, March 28, aged 91) – worked on *King Kong*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1941) and on TV, *Mission: Impossible* and the '60s *Batman*.

Kirk Alyn (Houston, March 14, of Alzheimer's disease, aged

88) – film's first *Superman* – in the 1948 15-part serial – and Lois Lane's father in a cameo in the 1978 blockbuster.

It was especially sad to hear of the death, in early April, of actor **Bob Peck**. The 63-year-old star of *Jurassic Park* and *Edge of Darkness* had been suffering from cancer for three years. His other film and television work included *Fairy Tale: A True Story*, *Jim Henson's The Storyteller*

Silpstream, The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles and *A TV Dante*.



Bob Peck

Convention Corner

This is a free service to convention organizers all over the world. To have your convention listed just send details to 'Convention Corner' at the editorial address given on the contents page. We regret that we cannot vouch for any of the conventions listed. Readers are advised to write enclosing an SAE to confirm the details (don't forget to mention Starburst!) and check availability of accommodation before sending any money.

SPRING LEAP '99

May 28-30 1999
Buxton Opera House, Derbyshire
Guests: John D'Aquino (Quantum Leap, SeeQuest), Colin Baker (Doctor Who)
Details: Spring Leap 99, 75 Ffars Ave, Delapre, Northampton NN4 8PX

TIMERIDERS '99

May 28-30 1999
Admiral Hotel, Liverpool
Guests: Anthony Ainley, Sophie Aldred, Terry Molloy, Michael Sheard
Details: 4 Trent Close, Grosvenor Park, Macclesfield, Lancashire LA3 3SR.

AVOLON TREK CONVENTION

Star Trek convention
June 4-6 1999
Meadowside Leisure Centre, Burton-on-Trent
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Details: Avalon Conventions Ltd. Tel: (01283) 521304 Fax (01283) 521305
Website: <http://www.aol.com/avalonconvention>

BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY

OPEN NIGHT
Fantasy & horror meeting and
Pumpkin book launch
June 11 1999, 5pm
The Princess Louise pub, 208 High Holborn, London WC1
Guests include: Ramsey Campbell, David Case, Stephen Jones, Graham Masterton, Kim Newman, Michael Marshall Smith, Brian Stobberford, Paul J Moulvey
Details: <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/5659/>

CONTINUUM 1999

Star Trek convention/party
June 26-28 1999

The Glasgow Thistle Hotel
Guscar, Rosamund Dawson (Tomas, Voyager), Lefrie Peto
Details: Continuum 99 (Starburst), PO Box 4014, Glasgow G23 5YD, Scotland. E-mail: continuum@drh-online.demon.co.uk

EARTH 2

5th Anniversary Reunion Party
July 16-18 1999
Sherman Oaks, California
Details: Earth 2 Reunion Party, 140 Panfield Road, Abbey Wood, London SE26 9DD UK or PO Box 3306, Oak Park, IL 60303-3306, USA. Email: e2party@aol.com
Website: <http://members.aol.com/e2party/home.html>

TELEFANTASTIQUE 2

Mult Media Science Fiction
convention
July 23-25 1999
Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow
Guest of Honour: Mire Furlan. Other guests: Peter Morwood, Diane Duane, more TBA
Details: Kim Knight, 36 Rochford Avenue, Loughlin, Essex IG10 2BS, England. E-mail: Al on f162@dsl.pipex.com

RCW139: RIDE FOREVER

4th annual Original Dole South
convention
August 1999

Toronto
All cast/crew invited
Details: Ffars, Bealson, Broadstone Rd, Stranraer, Scotland. Website: www.rcw139.org

DUE SOUTH CONVENTION

August 21-23 1999
Brianna Hotel, Manchester
Guest: David Marano
Details: Laura Grutcher, 34 Cornhampton Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset BH6 5NV

GALLIED CONVENTION IV

4th British Trek convention
August 27-29 1999
Heathrow, London
Guests: Walter Koening, Richard Arnold
Details: Galileo Conventions, 38 Planefree Avenue, Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 9TH

FANTASYCON XXIII

UK's original Fantasy and Dark Fantasy convention
September 17-19 1999
The Britannia Hotel, New Street, Birmingham
Guests: Robert Rankin, Louise Cooper, others TBA
Details: FantasyCon XXIII, 46 Oxford Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 5DT. <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/6859/fconxx3.htm>

TV News UK

Two of the original stars of **Rendell and Hopkirk (Deceased)** are expected to appear in the new version of the series, just about to start filming for the BBC. "Kenneth Cope (Hopkirk) and Annette Andre, who was the original Jeanie, are both keen to do something and we definitely want to do something to get them in some cameo roles," says series producer and writer Charlie Higson. "We're trying to get a few actors who have a resonance from some of those old Fantasy series, to give something for the buffs." He also promises the show will have a decent budget, and be a completely updated 1990s version of the classic ITC series. Vic Reeves will play the ghost of Marty Hopkirk with Bob Mortimer as his living and breathing detective partner Jeff Randall. Despite the stars' pedigree in alternative comedy and Charlie Higson's background as co-writer/producer/star of **The Fast Show**, he says it won't just be played for

laughs. "There is humour, but we're trying to make it come naturally out of the characters and the situations. You don't put Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer in something and expect it to be **Our Mutual Friend**, but it's very much a comedy-drama rather than a comedy. If people don't take it seriously, you get bored and you can't sustain it over 50 minutes." All six episodes are due to be completed by the end of the year and are likely to appear on BBC1 in 2000.

Sky One's surprise hit **Stargate SG-1** has been bought by Channel 4 and is due make its terrestrial television debut in August. Channel 4 is also showing Tom Hanks's lavish drama-documentary about the history of man's venture to our nearest celestial neighbour in **From Earth to the Moon** from Saturday May 1st at 12pm. Also on the

terrestrial front, Children's ITV brings us the animated tales of **Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century** from May 6th. Meanwhile, Sky is finally going to show the end of the second season of **Buffy: The Vampire Slayer** from May 28th and will follow quickly on with season three. The Sci-Fi Channel has been busy buying up more programmes, with

recent acquisitions being two movie spin-offs: **The Crow: Stairway to Heaven** from Bryce Zabel of **Dark Skies** fame and **The Not** starring Brooke Langton in the Sandra Bullock role. Also due to turn up on Sci-Fi in the coming months is anthology series, **Perversions of Science**.

Jane Killick



Stargate SG-1 to be shown by Channel 4 in the summer

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Horrors in Hill House for Theo (Catherine Zeta-Jones), Dr Marrow (Liam Neeson), Nell (Lili Taylor) and Luke (Owen Wilson)



The Haunting

The classic horror movie is revisited with stunning effects. By Judy Sloane

UNDER the gigantic dome in Long Beach, California, which once held Howard Hughes' infamous plane the *Spruce Goose*, Production Designer Eugenio Zanetti has created and built the magnificent and eerie interior of Hill House. Movie historians will remember the 1962 version of Shirley Jackson's Gothic ghost novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, entitled *The Haunting*, in which director Robert Wise ingeniously used the art of suggestion, rather than blatantly graphic and gory visual images, to unnervingly the audience.

Thirty-seven years later the novel is being revisited by director Jan DeBont, with special effects that are guaranteed to be more intricate and frightening, as Visual Effects Supervisor, Phil Tippett explains, "We're creating a character, and the character is Hill House, which is manifested through the ghost of Hugh Crain, the industrialist who was the evil murderer of children. As you walk into the main room of the house you think, 'the guy who built this place was off his rocker'."

The story revolves around a small group of people brought together to investigate the strange paranormal occurrences that emanate from Hill House. They are Dr Marrow (Liam Neeson), an expert in paranormal phenomena, Nell (Lili Taylor) who was the object of a poltergeist when she was a child, Theo (Catherine Zeta-Jones) who is gifted with extra-sensory perception and Luke (Owen Wilson), the nephew of the mansion's present owner.

Well aware of the first movie's reputation, Tippett comments with a smile, "I think the concern of everybody's was everyone remembers the original being cool because it *didn't* have many [special effects] in it! Everybody has a different idea about what is scary. So it's that balance of doing these phantasmagorical images, but trying to keep them understated to a degree that you really can't tell what they are."

And of the most vividly remembered visual effect from the original movie, Tippett remarks,

"We do have a bulging door, it's not the same bulging door – we have a CG bulging door, not a rubber one!"

Tippett is confident that this updated version of *The Haunting* will truly terrify a modern day audience. "There's a creepy tonality in this film that's being played out through the eyes of Nell, who you think is off her rocker, so everything comes off being more like an hallucination or a twisted vision which is psychologically unsettling."

Be prepared to be 'unsettled' this summer, when the movie finally hits the screens...

Now that's scary!



Tony Goldwyn, Cary Elwes and Bryan Cranston get suited up for a mission that made history



The Space Race

Tom Hanks joins the Space race with his acclaimed *From the Earth to the Moon*. By Caroline May

IF YOU CAN, forget Star Wars for one moment. Forget also Star Trek and Babylon 5. If it's a story of brave heroes you want, facing the Final Frontier against the odds and surviving life or death scenarios, you should look no further than *From the Earth to the Moon*.

The acclaimed 12-part drama series recreates the voyages of the 12 manned Apollo missions, from the early Space efforts of 1961 to the final lunar landing in 1972. Tense, exhilarating and uplifting, it's just as dramatic as anything from the minds of George Lucas or Gene Roddenberry – and this actually happened.

It was Ron Howard's hugely successful movie *Apollo 13*, in which Tom Hanks played astronaut Jim Lovell, which provided the impetus for HBO's acclaimed mini-series. Hanks, now regarded as Hollywood's biggest star with two Academy Awards and a host of hit films to his name, has frequently professed his

fascination for the Apollo missions. With *From the Earth to the Moon*, he would step back from acting, take on the mantle of executive producer (while also directing and writing an episode) and tell the whole dramatic history of the Space programme.

Amazing stories

"There were nine Apollo missions to the Moon," says Hanks, "and I think they are nine of the greatest stories of all time."

Framed against volatile international politics and domestic controversies, the series explores man's greatest adventure, while also examining the lives of those ordinary people who made it happen.

"We can all be heroes," states Hanks, "because the measure of a hero is by what we do and by the choices that we make. I think the world is almost corrupt with false heroes, people whose images mean more than their real deeds and people who are

constantly packaging themselves out as enterprises as opposed to actually being enterprising themselves.

"The great thing about the astronauts is that, by and large, they are not a self-promoting group of men. Not even guys who went to the Moon. If you were to meet Al Bean, or Jack Schmitt, or Pete Conrad, you might mistake them for insurance agents! But what is inside them, and what drove them to go to the Moon is what makes them heroes."

Like *Apollo 13* before it, *From the Earth to the Moon* utilized the services of NASA astronauts, engineers and administrators to ensure that the whole enterprise was as accurate as possible. One consultant who was vital to the whole project was Andrew Chaikin, whose book *A Man on the Moon* proved the primary sources of reference for the production team.

"We are translating exactly what happened," Hanks insists. "We were always trying to

Tom Hanks warms up his directing fingers



recreate what really happened in a fascinating manner. For example, we were always trying for that 'I didn't know that' factor.

"I didn't know that Apollo 12 was hit by lightning 30 seconds after it took off from the pad. I didn't know that the guys were so dirty that Dick Gordon made them come back in from the lunar module butt naked. We were always searching for the real things that happened and trying to figure out ways that we could dramatize them. We were always searching for a 70 per cent authenticity ratio."

Apollo 13

Having decided that the series would tell the entire story of the Apollo missions, Hanks and his fellow producers would face a challenge when it came to the eighth episode, *We Interrupt This Programme*. Like Ron Howard's movie, it dramatizes the events of Apollo 13—but this time from a different perspective, from the specialized point of view of the journalists who covered it.

"We really couldn't compete with that," says Hanks of the movie. "And I don't think we could stomach trying to recreate it."

"It's completely on the ground," he continues. "You don't even go up to Space at all. I think what's unique about those days when we on Earth were watching the story

of Apollo 13 was we had no shots from Space. It was all talking heads on TV, talking about what is going on, and maybe you'd see a cool model."

While Apollo 13 failed to complete its scheduled lunar landing, other missions were successful. In *From the Earth to the Moon* actors recreate man's first weightless steps on the barren rock—an interesting special effect that was achieved by unconventional means.

"How do you show the guys actually walking on the Moon? This was the technical thing we had to figure out. The obvious way of doing it was to get stunt men in those space-suits and have them walk around in slow motion. And you'd be right back to George Pal's *Destination Moon* in 1955.

"We eventually attached huge helium balloons to the moon-walking astronauts, and we have this fascinating effect."

Tom Verica, Dave Foley and Paul McCrimm get ready for their (moon) shot



Fredric Lane, John Mess and Mark Harmon as one of the Apollo crews



Having established himself as a screenwriter and director with *That Thing You Do!* in 1997, Hanks elected to script the final episode of the series himself.

"I wanted to be the guy who was able to really formulate how we left the Moon," he says. "I wanted it to be just as beautiful and just as inspiring to go there for the last time as it was for the first time."

"We can all be heroes ... The measure of a hero is by what we do and by the choices that we make"

FEEDBACK STARBURST LETTERS

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No Conquest

Jonathan Fisher
Via e-mail

Right, enough is enough! What is Sky One doing? Have they gone insane? Did IQs just suddenly drop? Remove *Mortal Kombat*, *Conquest* and that absolute rubbish *VIP* from our screens, or spend the rest of your lives in a pain amplifier! Yeah, those two series will be renewed. Not.

When I first watched *MKC*, I thought to myself, 'Hey, this looks like fun, could it replace my beloved *StarGate SG-1* in the same time slot? Oh, how wrong I was! All these names to remember - Kung Lao, Siang Sung, Zero, Tasha and a guy called Raden, or Raven! [Yes, something like that - *Letters ed*] The bad guy had the best line, 'I will steal your soul, Kung Lao!' Yeah, right. Very dodgy CGI, equally annoying funky martial art music! This doesn't work together and it shows badly on Sky One's otherwise excellent reputation. This series has enough cheese in it to sink the Titanic. I was going to make a joke about Pamela Anderson's series, *VIP* but let's not go there...

Every person and his dog on the planet will be going to see the next *Star Wars* movie, *The Phantom Menace*. I would be controversial as is my democratic right as an individual and state that I never liked *Return of the Jedi* and *The Caravan of Courage*; just two things annoyed me. Bloody Ewoks! I remember reading an article on George Lucas which was published last year in the *Sunday Times Culture* magazine. I'm sorry, I no longer have the



A scene from the movie everyone's going to see

article, so this is mostly from memory. In 1974, Lucas tried to sell his idea to a number of studios, 'a four or five page synopsis, badly typed and badly spelt, concerning The Star Wars: The Adventures Of Luke Star-Killer'; we all know who he turned out to be.

Lucas must have been reading a lot of Frank Herbert (we're not worthy, we're not worthy!) because *Dune* rhymes with 'Tatooline, both desert planets. Also, The Bene Cesserits, translate very well into the Jedi Knights. Hey, that rhymes too! [Are you sure about this? - *Letters ed*] In *Dune*, the first chapter in the book, the Reverend Mother uses 'The Voice' on Paul Atreides. Okay then, in *Star Wars*, Obi-Wan uses those lines that have become part and parcel of our everyday lives, 'These aren't the droids you're looking for, he can go about his business, move along, move along!'

Before people start racing along to see *The Phantom*

Menace, try to get a copy of *Dune*, and read it from cover to cover. Don't believe the hype. Make your own minds up.

Don't keep up with the Jones

Darren Allanson
Isle of Wight

Like so many others [except Jonathan Fisher, apparently - *Letters ed*] I am waiting in great anticipation of *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (these trailers were stunning) and no doubt *Starburst* will lead the way in its coverage of the event. Can I suggest, however, that you schedule your review of the movie for after its release?

Firstly, Alan Jones's reviews always include a brief plot synopsis; and I want to know as little as possible about the actual story. Secondly, there's no need to recommend this movie to anyone. Good or bad, everyone's going to see it.

But the main reason is that if Alan gives the film a less than favourable review (a possibility

given his views in the recent *Special Editions*), I'll be devastated. That may sound over the top, but I've been waiting 16 years for this movie; the last thing I want is to have my enthusiasm dampened at the last moment.

If - and it's a big if - *Phantom* proves a disappointment, I'd sooner find out for myself. I'm sure most *Starburst* readers will agree with me. By all means keep those wonderful photos and articles coming, but let's stay in suspense until July 16th. Of course, you could always just not read Alan's review... Hmmm, this name seems familiar.

Podtastic

Eddie Maddock
Twickenham

Typical. My anti-censorship rant is published in *Starburst* #249, and in the same issue *The Exorcist* video release is announced whilst *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is cleared for nationwide screening.

'There's no need to recommend this movie to anyone. Good or bad, everyone's going to see it'

Gaspar Noe's demanding *I Stand Alone* plays in London's West End (albeit with some optical blurring in the sex scenes), *The Driller Killer* is announced as a future video release on the BBFC's website and suddenly I'm starting to look like a bit of a plonker. New readers must be wondering what my problem is.

So it is, with a smile on my face and a song in my heart, that I'm pleased as punch to admit that *Mighty Joe Young* was good solid Disney fare, *Pleasantville* was pleasantly diverting, *Gods and Monsters* was a moving, mirthful masterpiece, and *The Faculty* was podtastic. The latter film was also preceded by ads for both *Bride of Chucky* and *eXistenZ*. Maybe Robert Rodriguez's fun packed bodysnatchers clone worked its magic a bit too well, or maybe I'm just paranoid, but it does seem strange that most of the criticisms in my letter were addressed by the BBFC as soon as they hit the newsstand. Aliens in Soho Square? Rabid Horror fans falling meekly into line? They're here, I tell you. You're next! You're next... Arrggghhh!!!! (well, it's been that sort of month). Have a happy 250th. Y'know, we were sure the aliens had got Eddie long before this...

Outright theft

Beth Cameron
Portsmouth
Why is the cancellation of *Crusade* such bad news? It's hard to care about a programme that nobody's seen yet. Even many Babylon 5 fans think the series ran out of ideas in its



Chris Barrie: holding his own and propping up the series?

'Krytie TV could very easily have been an episode of *Frasier* or *Men Behaving Badly*'

fourth year. Watching the repeats of the earlier episodes which were good made me realize I didn't want to see it become like *Star Trek*, endlessly dragged out through spin-offs which just rehash old ideas and situations.

Crusade features a ship which looks like an updated *Liberator*, an Avon-like character and arguing anti-heroes. What should have been ripped off from *Blake's 7* is a decent final episode to end the story.

It's amazing to believe that a programme which lasted 13 episodes which haven't been shown yet has had more pages of *Starburst* devoted to it than many other programmes, some of which people have seen or even last nearly 40 episodes, without a single article.

Please, please, please tell me if there is the slightest chance of the *Avengers* movie turning up on video with the edited footage put back in. Given its failure at the cinema, the studio has nothing to lose and the reinvention of the opening and the missing scenes would improve what was already the most stylish, surreal escapism of last year.

There's always a chance of extra footage appearing on a video release (as witnessed by the recent release of the *X-Files* film), but no word that this will happen in the case of *The Avengers*.

So who's Niles then?

Ric Parkinson
Grantham
There has never been such a let-down as the latter half of

Red Dwarf VIII. Just momentarily there was hope, with the fantastic Chris Barrie back on board, the return of the Lister/Rimmer bunk scenes and that silly Kochanski being skirted into the background. Then, it all went wrong. They got arrested, put on suicide missions and then on death row by us fans.

Rimmer had the best lines and actions – such as 'The world loves a bastard,' 'Follow the Rimmer-shaped blur' and his extra-long Rimmer salute – but one man cannot save a dying cult. Red Dwarf's action situations lack danger and excitement. It seems to be either plot or laughs – you can't have both. We used to have both – check out series six, the only series to get the balance between Sci-Fi and comedy right. The opening sequence to *Emohurk*, for example, where they are chased by the Space Enforcement Probe, runs rings around the hideous 'rat-arsed' attempt of late.

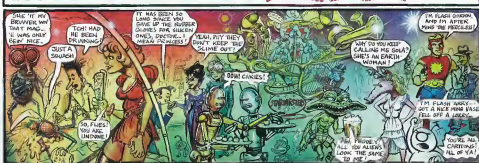
The series is meandering along without a clear idea of what it wants to be. The Sci-Fi element has been pushed right into the background – the absolutely dire *Krytie TV* could very easily have been an episode of *Frasier* or *Men Behaving Badly*.

If this series is supposed to migrate into a series of *Star Shite*... sorry, *Star Trek*-type films, it would help if there was more than three laughs per series. But it had the skaters in! Does this count for nothing? Something tells me there's yet more of this debate to come...

YOUNG DOCTORS IN SPACE

250th ISSUE CELEBRATION SPECIAL

by Robin Evans



The Power of the Force

*The countdown to Star Wars:
The Phantom Menace is almost
over... and some people have
already been queuing for weeks!
Starburst visited two Los Angeles
cinemas — The Mann's Chinese
Theatre and Westwood — and spoke
with fans who are determined
to be there first when the titles
roll... By Judy Sloane*

HIS name is Daniel Alter, and he's the first person in the world to line up to see *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*. His vigil began on April 7th, 42 days before the movie was to premiere. With lawn chairs, umbrellas, propane heaters, tents, mattresses, sleeping bags, pillows, comforters and blankets in hand, Daniel was joined by his friends who have set up their campsite outside the Westwood Theatre in Los Angeles. "I've been planning this for three years," admits Alter, "ever since Independence Day

opened and they showed the trailer for the re-release of the *Star Wars* Trilogy."

Alter, who graduated from high school last year, is taking this year off before he goes to film school, where he wants to emulate his heroes, George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. "I always regarded *Star Wars* as being a modern American mythology utilizing film, which is the most influential medium in the world. It's one of those movies that transcends every generation, every race, every religion, every gender, every class — it's universal."





26
days
until Star Wars

until Star Wars



The countdown to...

"Jake Lloyd came down to check out what we were doing. He had such a great time he wants to come back"

▶ After usually spends 98 hours a week in line, but he does get time off occasionally to go home, take a shower, brush his teeth and grab a quick nap. "I've been helping Daniel out," says his friend, Ken Munnell. "I come here and give him a spell so he can actually go get some sleep. On an average day I'm here four to eight hours—I have a life! But it's really fun to hang out in Westwood. The most beautiful women in the world are walking up and down the sidewalk, so it's motivating."

Daniel's cousin Michelle Marsh, the only female on line the day I visited, was eager to share with me her thoughts about the Star Wars phenomenon. "I think it rings a bell in people's mind about the way life should be lived, not necessarily the war part, but The Force is very spiritual."

Reactions

As for the reaction of the passersby, Daniel laughs, "Half the people immediately know that we are here for Star Wars, and they congratulate us. The other half walk by and say, 'What are you here for?' And when we tell them, the expressions on their faces are priceless."

By the way, Daniel knows precisely which seat he will be occupying on May 19th. "The Westwood Theatre seats 1,333," he says. "The exact seat I'll be in is 107, row F, which acoustically is the best seat in the house."

...the return of the Jedi Knights



His name is Lincoln Gasking, and he flew all the way from Australia to set up camp in front of the Mann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood to await the opening of *The Phantom Menace*, and to make money for the Starlight Foundation.

"A year ago two friends I met on the Internet and I decided to get together and meet—so we decided to meet in LA and see *Star Wars* at the same time. Then I saw Mark Hamill on television doing something for the Starlight Foundation, and I thought it would be a great idea to line up for a longer period of time and raise money for charity. So we decided on 1000 hours."

"To give you an idea of how this has become an event in itself, the Starlight Foundation grants wishes to children, and

last week a dying kid was granted a wish—they said, 'You can have anything in the world you want.' And he said, 'I want to line up for *Star Wars*!' They said, 'Do you want to see the movie? We can get you into the movie now.' He said, 'I don't want to see the movie, I want to be in the line!'"

On the Web

Armed with a videocam, a microphone and a computer, Gasking spends his time doing interviews and speaking with all the thousands of people worldwide who can vicariously share this unique experience on the website as the days count down to May 19th. "We've got 105 different countries visiting the site every day. People are seeing what's happening because the camera is all around us, up on the pole, so

He can't get enough *Star Wars*...



Mann's Chinese Theatre: the place to be! Plus, right, evidence at Oroid visits from two decades years ago...



people can actually experience it from home and communicate with us online."

As he sits by his computer day and night on Hollywood Boulevard, Gasking is surprised by how safe he feels. "I thought everyone here was getting shot every day," he confesses. "But I've been here for two weeks, 24 hours a day, and it's extremely safe. The police go by all the time. One of them wanted to be on the webcam last night, so that was very funny."

Last week Gasking and his friends received a visit from a curious child. "We turned around and there is this kid sitting

here. He said, 'Are you the guys who are waiting in line for 41 days for *Star Wars*?' I said, 'Yeah.' I was just being nice. I said, 'Who's your favorite character?' He said, 'Darth Vader.' I thought, this is no normal kid! I know who this is - it's Jake Lloyd! He had heard about the charity and came down to check out what we were doing. He was here for about a half an hour, and had such a great time he wants to come back. It wasn't a publicity stunt. The only reason there is film of it is because we have a camera."

The Australian admits that the "event" he created has turned out to be bigger than he

ever expected. "I knew there would be 10,000 people here on the last day, but I had no idea how much media attention there would be so early. We've got a doctor who has volunteered his services because he's a *Star Wars* fan. We were just discussing what the reaction of people in the theatre will be when the film is finally shown, and whether we will need an ambulance. It's like a rock concert. What will happen to these people who have waited so long? It's not just waiting 41 days in line, these people have been waiting 16 years for this to happen."

"It's not just waiting 41 days in line, these people have been waiting 16 years for this to happen"

Fierce Creatures

Anthony Simcoe is on fighting form as the Luxan Warrior D'Argo in *Farscape*. By James E Brooks

ASTRONAUT John Crichton (played by Ben Browder) is not a happy man. Sent on an experimental Space mission, he had hoped to be home for tea – but instead finds himself catapulted across a thousand galaxies into an alien battlefield. Trapped among advanced aliens, and hunted by militaristic creatures, Crichton attempts to find his way home...

That's the premise of *Farscape*, the acclaimed new SF series which boasts a marvellous ensemble of diverse characters. One of its most conspicuous members is pugnacious General D'Argo played by Australian actor Anthony Simcoe. Towering over the rest of the crew of the living starship Moya, D'Argo is known for being in a foul temper most of the time and more than willing to

make anything a confrontation. By contrast, Simcoe is friendly, chatty, and given to laughter. Well-known in his native Australia, this is actually Simcoe's second Science Fiction project; the first was a TV movie called *Chameleon*.

At the start of *Farscape*'s production, Simcoe not only had to get used to playing an alien on a spaceship, but an unusual shooting schedule, too.

"We started three weeks after the rehearsal period," he reveals, "shooting two episodes at once – episodes one and three, then two and four. The logic being that in order to save time on the schedule, you shoot all the scenes for two episodes that take place on the same set. Now we're just shooting them one at a time so we can get our heads around it."



Fierce Creatures

Anthony Simcoe is on fighting form as the Luxan Warrior D'Argo in *Farscape*. By James E Brooks

The *Farscape*-ers: General D'Argo (Anthony Simcoe), Officer Aeryn Sun (Claudia Black), Rygel XVI, Commander John Crichton (Ben Browder) and Pa'u Zath Zhaan (Virginia Hall)



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"Some of the animatronics are feature film quality and yet, we're just turning it over every eight days"

Working with and through the prosthetic make-up has been a learning experience.

"The mask works so differently in the lens than my own face does that it's been a learning process of finding what the best angles and lighting for D'Argo are – what works and what doesn't. As far as being in the make-up, it's so much like mask work in theatre. What's great about the way they've designed it is that I am able to get facial movement in the mask; it's not locked-off. I don't feel as if I'm in a big Disney theme park suit, if you know what I mean, where this big immobile head has been planted over me. I still feel fully in control of getting things through, getting emotion through the character's face."

Alien expressions

Starburst points out that when Roddy McDowell was doing *Planet of the Apes*, he would amplify his own facial expressions in order to get even the slightest movement through the rubber appliances on his face. Simcoe, however, observes that the problems McDowell had then don't really plague him today in the D'Argo make-up.

"Movement from my face to D'Argo's is not a straight translation," he claims, "but I think the technology has progressed in two ways – one way is that we're using a much lighter-weight latex than would have been available when *Planet of the Apes* was made. He was probably acting through a very thick heavy foam. The stuff I have is actually quite soft in texture, and though I still have to work my face harder than I normally would without it, it's not something I have to fight so hard against. Another helpful factor is that the directors are quite aware of the limitations and advantages of working in the mask so they are always keeping an eye on that as well."

When asked if D'Argo's deep voice comes from post-production manipulation, the actor laughs and lowers his tone, saying in the alien's voice, "No. I just speak like this." He returns to his own voice saying, "It's just me – very closely mimed."

Simcoe reveals another secret associated with the make-up. "If you look very closely on my head," he says, "I've got this sort of leather strap that goes over my head and right in the centre there I have a microphone.

D'Argo, ready for a fight



Far out in Space for Farscape



Rygel, as performed by John Eccleston



Because it's so close, you get that sound. It gives me a great opportunity to play around, especially on the softer sounds and scenes. What has aired so far in the States is really just a lot of blustering, but there are some episodes coming up which are really very, very soft and sensitive for D'Argo. Playing those scenes through that voice has been fabulous fun."

Of course, another aspect of the series that distinguishes it from other shows is the use of Jim Henson Creature Shop animatronic puppets in character roles. The process of acting with performers made from plastic, wire and metal could surely prove unnerving to any actor, but Simcoe has settled into it fairly

D'Argo and Zhaan – primary colours go so well together!



easily, taking his cue from his own childhood fascination with another Fantasy project.

"It is strange because the main animatronic, Rygel, takes six people to drive. So you are on set with lots of equipment, four puppeteers on set and two puppeteers just off-camera. It's also interesting because we act to the puppeteer's voice, not that of the person who actually does the voice the audience hears. So it is always weird to hear Rygel's voice in the final cut because it's not what we're used to on the set. It works and



it's wonderful, but it's just such a different experience for us. It's particularly exciting for me because I'm a Star Wars kid. I was seven, eleven, and thirteen when the three Star Wars films came out. I just loved them, so I grew up with Yoda, which Henson built for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Amazing animatronics

"You know, I'm constantly amazed at David Elfy who creates all the creatures for Jim Henson. His vision and understanding of Science Fiction as well as the amount of work he's done is just incredible. I mean, some of the quality of the animatronics is feature film quality and yet, we're just turning it over every eight days. Every single person in his CreatureShop is putting in that extra mile because they just believe in Dave's vision and the amount of credibility he brings to the project."

In spite of the incredible level of makeup and technology, though, Simcoe never loses sight of the most important component – the character. D'Argo is a very well-defined personality with a definite history which will gradually unfold over the course of the first season. Although Simcoe is unable to reveal the complete arc of the character, he does hint at interesting changes for the warlike giant.

"He's a general in the Lukan race and has been a prisoner on the ship for eight cycles; we're saying one cycle is roughly the equivalent of a year. He committed a crime which made him an outcast and we'll be dealing with that in episode 10. It becomes a crucial issue since he's covered up what his true crime was and in that episode – since this goes to the heart of trust between all these escaped prisoners – we'll find that it's very, very unexpected. It's a great episode because it sends D'Argo on a whole new path as well as really putting a lot of the puzzle together for who he is. There are already questions posted on the Internet about that and how he became a general so young. I think it's great that those questions take hold of the audience's mind."

Ways of the warrior

The character's emotional history is more complex and offers exciting possibilities for Simcoe. "I always think of D'Argo as the character who would love to be the hard-core warrior, but you get this sense that somewhere behind his eyes maybe he isn't all that tough because he exhibits just a little too much bluster. I constantly think of him as a teenager – someone who is a bit overconfident at the wrong time, a little too

assertive, and you get the sense that he really doesn't know as much as he thinks. Playing those vulnerabilities and searching for them is something that makes it really interesting for me as an actor. I'm always looking for opportunities to explore the naivety that comes with him."

In *Throne for a Loss*, D'Argo already begins to exhibit the kind of relationship with fellow crewmember Aeryn Sun that calls to mind the classic bickering relationship between McCoy and Spock in *Star Trek*. "I think that's right. Because of the hothouse these characters are put in they start to gain a respect for each other that they probably wouldn't like to admit to. But they do get each other out of terrible fixes and, as time goes on, more and more intimate facets of their personalities are revealed. In these early episodes, there's a lot of effort to establish the characters so you won't see much beyond D'Argo the Warrior or Crichton the Complex Scientist. But after the first four or five episodes, we start to show those other shades."

Far and away

Besides the stimulation of playing a character that is wide-open to development, Simcoe is having a marvellous time just working on the show.

"I've gained a lot of respect for the cast because people write off acting in this genre too easily. It is actually quite a difficult thing to do in the sense that you are working in a certain style. We make mistakes along the way, of course, but we are certainly learning over a period of time what works and what doesn't."

"I'm certainly learning from the people around me and that's a great experience. It's also a great challenge being in a situation where you're doing the same characters week after week. It's not like going from film to film where constantly doing a new project stimulates your creativity. On a long-running TV series where you come in for 14 to 16 hour days, you've really got to be challenged or you will just go out of your brain. And I'm getting challenged on this show and I'm getting to work with some amazing people!"

"You get this sense that somewhere behind his eyes maybe he isn't all that tough"

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What They Leave Behind

WARNING: THIS FEATURE CONTAINS SPOILERS!

As *Deep Space Nine* seals its airlocks for the last time, executive producer Ira Steven Behr previews the epic feature-length finale. By John Reading

The exact details of *What You Leave Behind* remain secret... but as this photo from the episode reveals, Kira (Nana Visitor) gets to wear a Starfleet uniform!



TO HEAR Ira Steven Behr tell it, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* pretty much ends — with *What You Leave Behind*, directed by Allan Kroeker and set to air the week of May 31 — where it began seven long years ago. “I think that the idea is to finish the story that we started in the pilot [*Emissary*]. That’s the overall thought behind the final two-hour episode,” explains Behr, who has been with DSN since its inception, first as a writer, then as a writer-producer, and finally as its executive producer and day-to-day guiding force. Sisko’s [Avery Brooks] arc is the story of a man who came to an assignment, on a space station, that he was not too happy with, who then got slowly sucked into not only the life of the station, but the life of Bajor. He became the Emissary of the Prophets and basically discovered that this assignment he did not want was the most important assignment in the Alpha Quadrant.

“*What You Leave Behind* finishes up that story. What I wanted to do, what I thought would be nice, was to have a final episode that, if the only two episodes of DSN you watched were the pilot and the final two-hour episode — even though there would be things that obviously would not make sense in the specific — it would make sense overall. Overall, you would get it. You’d get that there was a beginning and now there is an end. So, *What You Leave Behind* is the end.” ▶

Is this the end for Daxus (Casey Biggs), Kira and Garak (Andrew J. Robinson) in *What You Leave Behind*?



"The Dax character was just ripe for continuation... There were just so many places to take it"

Behr won't reveal plot specifics, but this much can be divulged: The Dominion War comes to a conclusion. There's a resolution to the Odo (Rene Auberjonois)/Kira (Nana Visitor) romance that may surprise viewers. Dr Bashir (Alexander Siddig) and Ezri (Nicole deBoer) do indeed wind up together. Certain characters perish and the fates of others are left up in the air, possibly never to be revisited. At press time, rumours circulated that Captain Sisko would die the death of a mortal, but live on as a Trill. Behr would neither confirm or deny that, in part because Sisko's fate apparently remained in question right up to the very end, until a day or two before the series wrapped production on April 20, with a scene — featuring the entire cast, plus many of the recurring cast members, most of them out of make-up, as extras — filmed in Vic Fontaine's (James Darren) holographic nightclub.

Seven minus one

With the series all but done, it's time to look back. The place to begin is year seven, a season that very nearly didn't come to pass. After a touch and go period near the end of the sixth year, Paramount consented to one more year and the entire cast returned, with the notable exception of Terry Farrell, who'd played Jadzia Dax for the show's entire run. Farrell's departure presented several intriguing dilemmas. Should she be replaced? If so, should the new Dax be a male or a female? If a female were chosen, should she hook up with Worf (Michael Dorn)?

The producers ultimately elected to go with a female and hired deBoer to play Ezri Dax. Ezri fits right in and episode after episode in the early part of Season Seven focused on the character. The episodes — *Afterimage*, *The Siege of AR-558*, *It's Only a Paper Moon*, *Prodigal Daughter* and *Field of Fire* among them — were mostly winners, with deBoer stepping up to the plate in fine fashion. Trekkers embraced the episodes and deBoer. There was no question about that. Some grumbled, however, that there might have been too much of a good thing. With so many episodes devoted to Ezri, the naysayers argued, the stories of the other series regulars took too much of a back seat.

A very sick Female Changeling (Siobhán Jinks) and Weyoun (Jeffrey Combs) return in *The Changing Face of Evil*



Cardassians play a major role in *What You Leave Behind*



Disaster strikes in *The Changing Face of Evil*



Prisoners of the enemy in the final story



Once more into the breach in *The Changing Face of Evil*

“The Dax character was just ripe for continuation... There were just so many places to take it”

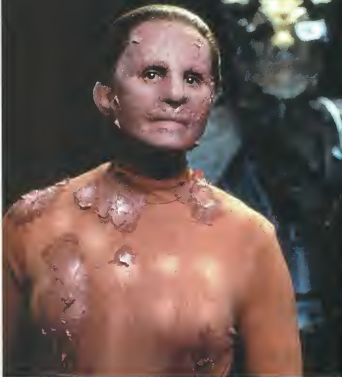
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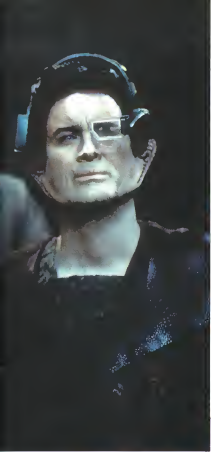
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"By Season Seven, a lot of things are being dictated to you. The series has a life of its own, to an extent"

► Behr listens intently to the argument, then offers this in response: "We brought in a new character for a number of reasons," he states. "One reason, and it's the simplest reason, is that if we did not bring in a new character it would have left Kira as the only continuing female character on the series, and I thought that was a mistake. Number two, *Deep Space Nine* is supposedly a Science Fiction series, and the Dax character was just ripe for continuation. It just seemed like there was so much more to do with the character, so many places to take it, that it seemed like a no-brainer to bring in Ezri. And we had a lot of fun with her. Did it come at the expense of the other regulars? I don't know if that's true. You could point to a lot of things. We spent a lot of time with the supporting players as well, which also took away, you might say, from the regulars."

"At this stage of the game, by Season Seven, a lot of things are being dictated to you. The series has a life of its own, to an extent, in terms of the stories that are asking to be told."

Wrapping it up

"When it all wraps up I think we did pretty well by all the characters, I really do. *DSN* is one of these shows, and I've said this for years now, where it's very easy to lose your way. It's tough sometimes to see the forest from the trees. Once the series is over and you look back at the 176 episodes, a lot of things that seemed to be meanderings and off-shoots of the main path turned out to have a cohesion that might not have been readily apparent."

Another controversial choice made by Behr involved the Dominion War. Rather than spend a batch of episodes on that particular arc, it played out over all of Seasons Six and Seven, as well as a portion of Season Five (when it was set in motion). It was a gutsy move, dramatically, financially, in every way imaginable. Think about it. The war imbued the show with an even more serious, darker tone than it already had. Life and death issues hung over every show. The arc made episodes not related to the war—say *Take Me Out to the Holosuite* or the generally humorous Ferengi hours—stand out more than they ►

DS9 Debriefing

And... It's a wrap! The final episode of *Deep Space Nine* ended production in April, and a few days later the cast gathered for a glitzy Hollywood party to celebrate the show's seven years. *Starburst* was there to meet the stars, to discover their thoughts on *What You Leave Behind*, and their hopes for the future...

Rene Auberjonois - Odo

"I feel great. It feels like the end of a seven-year Thanksgiving dinner. The closure is there, it's complete. I think we told all the stories that were important to tell. I'm glad to get the make-up off and I'm looking forward to inventing some other characters now. I would never say never to playing Odo again, but right at this moment I feel happy with the way it all evolved and has resolved itself. I think for people who have followed it, it was an inevitable resolution and the right resolution. Some people will be disappointed and some people will think it's the perfect thing. Most of them, who care about the character, will probably be needing some tissues at the end."



Alexander Siddig - Dr Bashir

"I feel great and really optimistic about tomorrow. I was a little bit sad the day before yesterday when we wrapped it up. When the show finally finishes expect some rip-roaring action. We spent way too much money."

"The finale is about Kira, it's her show. She's the one who does all the goodbyes."

"If we get the opportunity, I'm sure Nana and I will work together again. We love working with each other. It's kind of funky and strange to work with your wife, but I guess the chicken came before the egg on this particular occasion."

A bit of *DSN* glamour from Alexander Siddig and Nana Visitor © S. Schindler/Wonglow Photos



Armin Shimerman – Quark

"It's very bittersweet. I must say when the head came off for the last time the other night I yelled, 'I'm free, I'm free, I'm free.' But also there was a little Quark voice in the back of my head that said, 'Don't kill me, don't kill me.' I'm very sorry to see him go. Quark taught me a great deal. He taught me how to be outgoing, he taught me to be more charming than I am, he taught me to take chances, to enjoy life. Quark enjoyed life a great deal. He pushed the envelope and that's something that I learned from him. I don't think there's much more I could do with the part, but if there was I would have enjoyed doing it. Without giving anything away, I'm rather pleased with what happens to Quark, but not necessarily in the finale. What happens prior to that is quite fascinating as well. In fact, our finale is really not the last two hours – it's really the last 10 episodes, so you have to group them together as a finale. Ira Steven Behr broke all the boundaries and made *Deep Space Nine* come alive. He took *Star Trek* in a different direction and made it a much more powerful show."



Departed crewmember Terry Farrell drops by the party
© S. Schindler/Washington Photos



Nana Visitor – Colonel Kira

"What my character was doing on the show always meant too much to me. The other actors were a little nervous about me and where my mind was, because I really cared if I got a promotion! So I'm pleased with the way the show ends."

"Oh my God, it was hard [ending]. James Darren came up to me, I'm off camera, and he's singing his song, doing his close-up, and I'm trying to hold on for his sake, but I'm weeping and I just lost it. I lost it a couple of times. I was very, very emotional."

"[After the final wrap was called] we stood there because it's traditional after every episode to say, 'And that's goodbye and good night to Siddig, and that's goodbye and goodnight to Avery Brooks,' and everyone [gives polite applause]. But this time the applause was sustained and said everything that everyone felt. It went on forever. And we just stood there – it was hard to realize that it was all over."



otherwise would have. In terms of syndication, there would be fewer stand-alone episodes, making it tough for the average channel surfer to follow the action should they hore in on a random DSN hour.

Creating the Dominion

"The Dominion began in Season Two," Behr says. "People forget that. The Dominion developed out of the fact that when I came on the show, one of my first questions to [series co-creators and producers] Rick Berman and Michael Piller was, 'What's happening in the Gamma Quadrant?' They really didn't have an answer at that point. One of the things I felt I needed to do was to come up with the answer to what's in the Gamma Quadrant, to what's on the other end of the wormhole."

"We – Peter Fields, Robert Wolfe, Jim Crocker and myself – sat around for lunch after lunch during the second season discussing what that was going to be. That's when we came up with the idea of the Dominion."

"We knew that the Dominion was ultimately going to become the big evil empire that *Deep Space Nine* would be faced with, that they'd be the big antagonists on the series. So, we slipped it in."

"The first mention of the Dominion came in *The Rules of Acquisition*, which was a comedy episode about the Ferengi. We did that on purpose. Then we started sprinkling the Dominion in a little bit more in the second season, until the end of that season, when we met the Jem'Hadar and the Vorta. Then we kept sprinkling it through and we knew that eventually either we were going to have to have to go there or they were going to have to come to us. And it didn't seem right for us to go there... so, the Dominion War."

"Deep Space Nine gave fans an opportunity to have a unique experience. That's all we could try to do"

- ▶ The Dominion War is typical of DSN. It was risky, off-putting, full of sinister, often haunting moments. It also exemplified DSN's major quandary: finding a broad audience. Make no mistake, DSN was a successful enterprise, one with a large, loyal fan base. But it never enjoyed the large following of *The Next Generation*, never was a huge ratings grabber (though it spent most of its run as the top-rated hour drama among syndicated programmes).

Cult Trek

Behr admits that he felt frustrated at times over the fact that DSN was not universally loved. "On one level it was frustrating, but I think we brought the cult back into *Star Trek*," he notes. "There were people who liked *The Next Generation* who never struck me as Science Fiction fans, to tell you the truth. I think *The Next Generation* was a very accessible show, a very non-threatening show. I think that *Deep Space Nine* gave fans an opportunity to get on board, to have an interesting, unique experience. That's all we could try to do. Did we want to have more media coverage? Did we want *The X-Files* kind of thing? It would have been nice. But, ultimately [by not sitting directly in the spotlight and, therefore, not under quite as much constant scrutiny], we had a lot of creative freedom to do whatever we wanted. And *Deep Space Nine* was the better for it."

Now it's onto new frontiers for Behr. He signed a production deal not long ago with Paramount Pictures and will keep his office on the lot as he prepares to create new shows and films. At some point, a DSN TV movie or a feature might come to pass and, of course, he hopes to be involved. "It's like when they came to me and asked if I wanted to write a book about the Rules of Acquisition," he explains. "If I didn't do it they would have gotten someone else to do it, and the thought of someone else doing it I really could not abide. If it had to be done, I wanted to do it."

"If there's a feature, obviously, I would love to write it. I'd love to have the kind of a canvas to work on. It all depends. It all depends. But I care a great deal for these characters."

DS9 Debriefing

Nicole deBoer – Ezri Dax

"It was weird coming onto a show when everybody had known each other, and had been a part of it for six years. But everybody was so great to me and I think the writers did a really good job. I was just happy to be a part of it. I've been a fan, so it was very exciting for me. And to kiss Worf! If somebody had told me that back when I was 15 watching *The Next Generation* I wouldn't have believed them. I'm sad that it's over – even for one season it becomes your family because you spend so many hours together condensed."

"I liked the arc that Ezri had. She started out very vulnerable and confused and by the end of this season she had grown into a more confident person. I hope we see her again. Nobody's mentioned it to me, but if someone asks me I would do it."



deBoer: "So great!"

Cirroc Loftus and Michael Dorn party on
© S. Schmidt/Warner Bros. Pictures



Michael Dorn – Worf

"I feel great. It's been 12 years for me. I hate to say it, but I'm just happy because it means no more make-up. If there's another movie it will be two or three years down the road. Who knows where any of us will be at that point."



Dorn: "Happy"

Cirroc Loftus – Jake Sisko

"It feels like it's coming to a closure now. So I'm saying goodbye to everybody, seeing all my friends in their regular clothes. The best thing that I've taken out of *Star Trek* was being introduced to Avery Brooks who has become my mentor, my guiding light and, basically, my father. I love him with a passion and that's one of the greatest things I got from *Star Trek*."



Loftus: "Closure"

James Darren – Vic Fontaine

"I feel awfully sad tonight. I'm singing at tonight's party, so it's going to be fun. I'll probably sing *Come Fly with Me* and *The Best is Yet to Come*. It's going to be cool."

Aron Eisenberg – Nog

"For seven years it's been such a blessing for me and it's really sad that it's over, but hopefully there will be good things in my future. I've been so fortunate to be a part of it. I'm not happy it's over, but I'm happy to be here on the final show. I was very surprised by how my character evolved. The first season I was sitting there saying to myself, 'They're going to send me away, I know it.' So I was always worried I was never going to keep going, but I did. I just grew and grew and grew. This last season has been awesome. They've been really good to me. I think the arc of my story was *Paper Moon*—that was my story. They have so many stories to tell, and that was when mine pretty much finished. I get a little bit something at the end, so that is cool. I sure hope to play it again, it was such a fun character that I would be there in a heartbeat."



Eisenberg: "Awesome"

Louise Fletcher – Kai Winn

"It's sad, I've made such good friends and have had such a wonderful time overacting for six years! It's operatic stuff and I had to live up to my costume! I just could not imagine what terrible thing they had to do to give her her comeuppance. But they found something. I've done a lot of Sci-Fi in my career, but this was the first character that has been really out-there. I've mostly played real people... but I've tried to make her real."



Piller: "It's over"

Michael Piller – Co-creator

"Today was 'bring your daughter to work day' at Paramount, and I walked her around the *Deep Space Nine* sets, which are already coming down. All the lights were lined up in a row. She's nine years old, so she hadn't really remembered seeing it before, and she said, 'Cool!' And suddenly I realized that she's discovering this and it's the last time that we'll ever see it. That's when it hit me that it's over."

"My feeling is that, with great appreciation to Ira Steven Behr and Rick Berman, this show has held its

creative integrity from beginning to end and I'm very proud of what we've set out to do, and I think they did a terrific job in following through. I think that Ira took the characters in remarkably interesting ways."

Brannon Braga – Executive producer *Star Trek: Voyager*

"I feel a little melancholy but it's an exciting time. *Voyager* will be the only show on the air. It's exciting for *Voyager*. But, at the same time, anytime a show goes off the air it's not a great thing for the franchise. But *Deep Space Nine* had a great run. I was just on the set the other day and the final episode is amazing and very moving."

"There are no plans to bring *Voyager* home right now. In the season finale we will not do that, and that's the first time I've said that! But you never know, maybe in the first episode [next season]. We like to change *Voyager* every year a little bit. So there will be some changes this year."

Judy Stoen



Darren: "Sad"



Fletcher: "Operatic"



Braga: "Moving"



What You Leave Behind
Kira fights back

Finally, there's the little matter of letting go of DSN. It's been a part of Behr's life for seven years. For the past several seasons it's been his baby to raise. Now, that baby is out of the house. "It would be very hard to let go if there anything to hold onto," Behr says in conclusion.

"When Robert Wolfe left *Deep Space Nine*, as close as we were, I never made any attempt to convince him to stay. I just could sense that he felt it was time to move on. I'm trying to have the same attitude now. It's been seven years. I have nothing to complain about. It's been a great run. Yes, I'm going to miss it, but right now I'd rather concentrate on the pride I feel having been here for seven years. Was there something else I would rather have been doing with my time? Not that I can really think of."

"*Deep Space Nine* was a good gig."



The beginning...
the pilot episode *Emissary*

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THINGS TO COME... THAT DON'T

The Starburst news that never came to pass... By Tony Crawley, Michael Courtland and Ian Calcutt

Don't believe the hype!

The Walt Disney combine are still promising everything with their *Black Hole* SF movie... The studio hype insists that this film 'will surpass the mind's conception of even the most extraordinary of Science Fiction extravaganzas' (#13 – or perhaps it won't!)

Not a lot of Salem

'Stephen King's four-hour mini series, *Salem's Lot*, is now expected to become a weekly series' (#21 – it didn't)

Delayed Contact

'Contact... Won't make it until 1983, according to Polygram Pictures' (#32 – 15 years later it was finally released in 1998)

Super title

'*Superman III* will not be called that. It will have a proper title' (#39 – *Superman III* was called exactly that)



We should be so lucky!

'George Lucas has spelled out his future plans, including the final six *Adventures of Luke Skywalker* and four more *Indiana Jones* films' (#53 – The figure now stands at three more *Star Wars* movies and one more *Indiana Jones*)

Things don't change...

'The *Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy* is going to Hollywood' (#58 – the movie is still in pre-production!)

One that got away

'The *ET 2* scenario is futuristic. Elliot will be in his twenties, and the story takes place both here and *ET*'s world' (#59 – it never happened)

Never say never again

'Chris Reeve has thrown in his cape. *Superman III* is the end of Metropolis' – (#62 – then came *Superman IV*...)

Don't feed the plants!

'Steven Spielberg is going to make the 3D musical movie of *The Little Shop of Horrors*' (#64 – in 2D, that duty eventually went to Frank Oz)

ET goes Brit?

'Steven Spielberg is, apparently, eager to start making *ET 2* this year... at Elstree Studios' (#67 – he didn't)

10 years later...

'Filming of a new *Star Wars* film will start in the autumn... tentatively called *The Clone Wars*. US release date is planned for Christmas 88' (#105 – *The Phantom Menace* finally materializes in 1999)

Movie Who...

'Coast to Coast have apparently bought the rights to make a new film based on *Doctor Who*' (#108 – the project never got beyond pre-production)



...or when

'The signs are very good on the major new *Doctor Who* movie currently in active preparation... although you'll have to wait until mid-1989 before you get the chance to clap eyes on it' (#114 – the false alarms continue)

Slip up

'Good news for fans of the early 70s ITV series *Timeslip*... Saffron productions have bought the option on the series... they plan to get a new series into production this year' (#126 – it remains lost in Time)

The cat's whiskers

'Ex-Shalamar songstress Jody Watley has been offered the role of *Catwoman*' (#134 – it was actually Michelle Pfeiffer)

Who's that?

'The Doctor will be played by Donald Sutherland and



Caroline Munro will appear' (#135 – rumoured casting for the *Doctor Who* movie)

More Batman names...

'Various star names are being considered for the guest villain roles in the sequels – Madonna and Cher for Catwoman, Dustin Hoffman, Danny De Vito and Bob Hoskins for the Penguin, and potential Riddlers include James Woods, Robert De Niro and Robin Williams' (#137 – we got one right!)

Locked up again

'Good news for those of us who are still trying to figure out the true meaning of that classic TV series *The Prisoner*. They will have a second chance at solving the riddle soon if now-firm plans to make a sequel come to fruition... This time around the Prisoner is set to be a woman – with McGoonan playing the evil genius in charge of the village' (#141 – like the proposed movie, it failed to materialize)



Who's next?

'Rumours continue to circulate about the long-awaited *Doctor Who* film – the most recent being that Rutger Hauer would play the world's most famous Time traveller' (#149)

And Beetlejuice too!

'Tim Burton will make *Batman 2* as soon as he's finished lensing *Beetlejuice in Love...*' (#154 – *Beetlejuice 2* was not made)

Alien Three, take one

'The script has Weaver landing on a distant mining planet, and then finding you can't keep a good man-dile down when the aliens start appearing in ever more frightening guises – like the biggest Alien of them all, the male mate of the warrior queen' (#161 – sadly *Alien 3* wasn't that exciting!)

High five

'Alexander Salkind has just announced there will be a fifth instalment. He's currently considering a number of possible stories that will bring Christopher Reeve back to the red underpants, including a scenario which involves a new and top secret arch villain turning a shrinking ray on Metropolis and everybody in it' (#167 – there wasn't a fifth Superman instalment...)

Devil's due

'Brad Pitt has been cast as the young lawyer in *The Devil's Advocate* which Joel Schumacher is directing' (#70 – wrong on both counts!)

To the Max

'George Miller is now deep in discussion with Warners about *Mad Max 4*, which he hopes to shoot in 3D' (#176 – it didn't even happen in 2D!)

Cat flap

'Michelle Pfeiffer will get her own movie as Catwoman some time next year' (#182 – the franchise was pawed...)

Giant false alarm

'Ambush entertainment has announced plans for a *Land of the Giants* feature which would re-unite the cast members from the original series' (#182 – it was a tall story)

More Who-ha

'Steven Spielberg is pursuing a deal with the BBC which will allow him to resurrect the cult series which was put into limbo by BBC bosses in 1989... David Hasselhoff has expressed an interest in the role' (#183 – and we were scared!)

Generations gap

'Spock is almost certain to appear, as Leonard Nimoy has remained on good terms with the producers since Season 5's *Unification*' (#185 – false hopes for *Star Trek: Generations*)

Rocky road

'BBC insiders suggest that negotiations for the new TV series are all but complete with Richard O'Brien favourite to secure the role as the Science Fiction Icon' (#187 – the *Doctor Who* casting rumours flowed thick and fast)



Who'd believe it!

'Latest rumours suggest that Ridley Scott and Steven Spielberg will helm a number of episodes, while *Next Generation* scripter Brannon Braga is also linked to the project. Monty Python's Eric Idle has been linked with the title role, with *Baywatch*'s Pamela Anderson supposedly playing his assistant' (#190 – so, two of the greatest movie directors in the world want to work on *Doctor Who*. Yeah, right...)

Captain casting

'While rumours suggest that Bionic Woman Lindsay Wagner and *Cheers* star Kirstie Alley are producer Rick Berman's choice for the lead role in *Star Trek: Voyager*, Paramount want a man in the Captain's chair' (#191 – life before Janeway...)

Beyond our Ken

'Although George Lucas hasn't even started hammering out the script for the first instalment of the new *Star Wars* trilogy, rumours are already starting to circulate that Kenneth Branagh may be tapped for the role of young Obi-Wan Kenobi' (#192 – we were not even closer!)

Idle threats

'Space *Princet* is confirmed for a 24-episode second season' (#199 – er, it wasn't!)

Blade Walking

'The long-awaited sequel to *Blade Runner* has been officially announced' (#207 – and the project still resides in development hell!)



STARBURST 250

STAR BYTES

We've chatted to hundreds of Sci-Fi celebrities; here are some quotes to remember... and forget!

THE VAULTS



"I don't think anyone expects us to be a hit. How can it be? It's an old movie" **George Lucas** completely underestimates the pulling power of *Star Wars: The Special Editions* (#223)



"George gets very depressed when he makes movies. He's always convinced that once and for all he'll be exposed as having no talent!" **Mark Hamill** on *Star Wars* guru **George Lucas (#24)**



"A lot of people write Ripley like a pissed off gym instructor... I've tried to play Ripley just as an ordinary person that is put in extraordinary circumstances" **Sigourney Weaver** defines the character during the making of *Alien 3* (#169)



"By the end of this we may have gotten all we've wanted to get out of it. I also believe you can be around too long. You want to get out when you're still good" **Bruce Boxleitner** considers the fifth season of *Babylon 5* (#230)



"You couldn't really fall with it... it's a brilliant slot. People's metabolism changes in the week, doesn't it? One feels different on a Monday to what one feels on a Friday... and on a Saturday night particularly" **Tom Baker**, before the *Doctor Who* timeslot changed and ruined everything! (#20)



"Laughter is a great gift. If you are a film-maker who can elicit laughter, it's a very rewarding experience... The flipside is, if you aren't quite as certain of your abilities and are still learning your craft as I am, sometimes you have to settle for second best. And that's making them scream" **Director Sam Raimi** gets things in perspective (#148)



"Star Trek was the only show or movie that feature black people... That's why I wanted to be a part of *The Next Generation*. They thought this was the most amazing thing in the world. They built a set for me and they wrote me a character" **Whoopi Goldberg** on coming aboard the *Enterprise* (#148)



"When *The Exorcist* came out I had to have bodyguards. I had threats – major, serious threats, they were gonna kill me" **William Friedkin** on a hellish time of his life (#145)



"There are no plans for K9 to leave during this season at all" **Producer John Nathan-Turner**, interviewed during Season 18 of *Doctor Who* – in which K9 left (#27)



"Sadly it will never happen despite all the rumours you have heard" **James Cameron** on *Terminator 2* (#99), which actually did happen in 1991 – with talk of another sequel to follow...



"I wasn't looking for James Bond in my life. I didn't seek the role out either times. But I like the character, a lot of life experience has run through my fingers, and not much can touch me now" **Pierce Brosnan** joins the Bond franchise – finally! – with *GoldenEye* (#208)



"My movies are my therapy. Making movies is a lot better than paying \$90 an hour to lie on a couch" **Tim Burton** provides some insight into his state of mind (#169)



"Some days I wasn't used at all, and I'd be sitting in my dressing room. I couldn't even go on the set and watch what was going on. I could read but eating was difficult. So I just sat in my room, surrounded by mirrors. I saw this creature staring out me... I was fascinated" **Ian McDiarmid** contemplates his alter ego Emperor Palpatine while making *Return of the Jedi* (#72)



"I was annoyed with [*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*] because I'm annoyed with anyone who takes flying saucers that seriously" **Arthur C. Clark** dismisses Steven Spielberg's SF classic (#28)



"Chris and I had very different styles. He thought I was an outrageously undisciplined slob who came charging in with too much energy, and I thought he was a kind of uptight priss. After a couple of months we finally had a head-on confrontation and we ended up being the best of friends" **Margot Kidder** reveals some behind the scenes friction on the set of *Superman* (#34)



"After four series we've really done nothing wrong, but you don't get any interest from BBC Enterprises. Everyone says it's a cult, but there's no merchandise for people to go and buy" **Danny John-Jules**, during the days when *Red Dwarf* was just a low-key hit with fans (#151)



"I couldn't do anything but cry for months after I finished *The Terminator*. The role carried over into my private life in a way that got quite dangerous as all the stress and tension I went through became very real to me" **Linda Hamilton** comes over all emotional over *The Terminator* (#84)



"I found *Doomwatch* very horrifying because Kit Pedlar, who worked for the government, kept wandering into scientific establishments and coming out with armfuls of files marked 'Top Secret'" **Veteran script writer Dennis Spooner** on the perils of being involved in a cutting edge TV drama series (#45)



"I believe there is a wider audience out there who have not sampled it, and I would like to come in on Friday nights and make this something they sit down and do on a regular basis. I'd like nothing more than to build my ratings and get the show to more people, because it's worthy and deserving of it" Four years ago, Chris Carter looks forward to the day when *The X-Files* might find a mainstream audience! (#201)



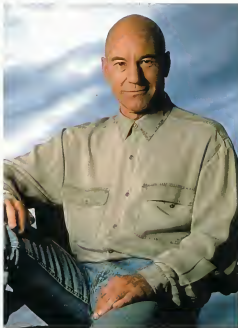
"I like the movie because it's completely unpretentious and that's what I think critics misunderstand. I mean, what were they expecting?" **Matthew Broderick** bravely tries to defend the non-event movie *Godzilla* (#238)



"People have asked me, 'I guess it was a lot of fun wasn't it?' It was no fun at all!" **Buster Crabbe** on the perils of playing the original *Flash Gordon* (#37)



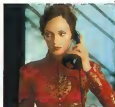
"There was a point where I was wearing so many wigs that I thought we should give her a hobby of hairdressing — maybe she's a closet hairdresser. Maybe you go to her room and she's got rows of wigs and a wig cap! I would be happy to do that, but they wouldn't let me!" **Gates McFadden** on how *TNG*'s Dr. Crusher almost did surgery with a cut and blow dry (#183)



"Since working on *Star Trek*, I've become fundamentally sillier. And I've my colleagues on the show to thank for that. And I do thank them, because I think fundamental silliness is a splendid thing for a classically-trained English actor in his early 50s to be able to boast!" **Patrick Stewart** begins to let his hair down on the very relaxed set of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (#182)



"I wouldn't claim to have a great love of the Science Fiction genre... Most Science Fiction these days is Space Fiction... unfortunately. I never sat down and said, 'I am going to write an SF film'. I merely wanted to tell a story" **Andrew Niccol**, writer of *The Truman Show* and *Gattaca*, two of the SF greats of the 1990s (#236)



"It's an action movie in a non-malicious way and a romantic comedy in a very charming and elegant way. It's not really a love story, it's a buddy movie with a delicate sensibility and an unusual sense of humour to it" **Uma Thurman** defines the spirit of *The Avengers*, but doesn't mention that, in all truth, it's a load of old nonsense (#241)



"I don't think Sarah Michelle Gellar, Alyson Hannigan or the others really know what I look like" **Mark Metcalf**, alias *The Master* in *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, on how recognition has eluded him — even on set! (#245)



"It's very difficult to establish a three dimensional character when you've just got the odd line. Obviously in something like *Blake's 7* they're not great character lines anyway" **Glynnis Barber** on the downside of being an SF heroine (#39)



"If you count the number of storylines, there's six going on in this thing... That really limits [a character's] time on screen. People say, 'Do you have an arc?' And I say, 'Not really'" **While the *Star Trek* cast sing the praises of *Insurrection*, Michael Dom seems a trifle unconvinced** (#246)



"I usually say, 'Leonard is a great guy to work with' James Doohan on how he responds to the question 'What is it like working with William Shatner?' (#106)



"I would love to take the credit for having saved the show. I can't – it was the writing. The writing improved by leaps and bounds last year" Jeri Ryan proposes her theory as to why ratings rose when *Seven of Nine* stepped aboard *Voyager* (#247)



"In the latest series the characters stopped developing, and *Red Dwarf* became a visual effects show, with gags that existed and had been created in the third, fourth and part of the fifth series" Chris Barrie disapproves of the *Red Dwarf* Season Six scripts (#183)



"I was told that when Alice [Krige] originally tried the suit on, the material shrank, cutting off her circulation. Her hands and feet started turning blue" Susanna Thompson on the trials and tribulations of being a Borg Queen (#246)



"You will be able to sing it. I've written some words and turned it into a pop song" Producer Vere Lorrimer has a very bad idea for *Blake's 7*'s theme (#36)



"Bob came in to talk about this 20th anniversary show... John [Nathan Turner] wanted everything in it. He wanted all the Doctors, he wanted every monster we could get our hands on. I mean the brief was lunatic, absolutely lunatic, and of course Bob Holmes just fell on the floor laughing because it was so bloody stupid" Script editor Eric Seward reveals why *Who* stalwart Robert Holmes passed on writing 20th anniversary story *The Five Doctors* (#97)



"A curious thing happened while making *The Abyss*. The more we emphasized the secrecy of the film, the more people tended to look for negative information. None of the actors hated me at all" James Cameron (#135)



"We decided we would keep the same spaceship... another spaceship might not work as well as the one we've got" David Maloney speaks to *Starburst* during Season Three of *Blake's 7*... ironically, after his departure, a new spaceship was introduced, to a poor response (#18)



"It's ludicrous that BBC Enterprises should be sending us scripts saying, 'We look forward to working with you' but they hadn't managed to make contact with any of our agents, or asked if we wished to be involved!" Peter Davison on the fiasco surrounding the aborted *Doctor Who* 30th anniversary special *Dark Dimensions* (#181)



"Bill Shatner, who conceived the story, has a strong belief that one of the strongest elements of *Star Trek* is the relationships of the three main cast: Kirk, Spock and McCoy. The film deals with them almost exclusively, and we [Sulu, Scotty, Uhura and Chekov] are really animated furniture" Walter Koenig on *Star Trek V* (#134)



"When I read [the script of *Passion*] I couldn't believe it. The scene that made me cry was where I'm on the phone and it's shot in silence. It was where you see [Buffy and Willow] react to my telling them that she's dead, and it's a beautiful scene" Anthony Stewart Head recalls a moving episode of *Buffy*, in which one of the principal characters is murdered (#248)



"Daleks are lousy conversationalists. You really can't have more than about six lines of dialogue without losing most of your audience" **Doctor Who** scripter Ben Aaronovitch (#123)

"It's so ridiculous to liken **Doctor Who** to a second rate pantomime" **John Nathan Turner** on accusations that he turned **Doctor Who** into... (#113)



"There had not even been a full one seen on the screen. The phone never stopped from that moment on. The mail started piling in. And the following week we had a huge shoot-up of audience tuning in, and then it went crazy. Absolutely crazy... I really thought that this show was going to vanish! And it wouldn't matter what I did now, I will always be Terry 'Daleks' Nation" **Terry Nation** on the birth of Dalek-mania in 1964 (#200)



"David was treating a futuristic show as if it were dealing with homosexuality in the present day. In which they are secretive... Homosexuals are not going to be like that once we get out of these generations. I have no objection to homosexuality. I've never tried it, and I kind of regret that" **Gene Roddenberry** on David Gerrold's aborted **TNG** episode *Blood and Fire* (#151)



"If Fox want to make [**Alien 4**] that's great, but I won't be in it! **Alien 3** was so conclusive and it would be silly to plunge Ripley in another set of horrible circumstances. I want to make different kinds of films... a love story perhaps" **Lance Henriksen** passes on **Alien 4** to make a romantic film... then goes and stars in *Millennium* (#187)



"From a pure acting point of view, the problem of dying and how to die was the most interesting challenge to me. I had to give it a lot of thought. Emotionally you just have to take your pants off when you die just like you do when you make love... It was different working on this film because I was, to a large extent, not working with my comrades. I felt really estranged" **William Shatner** bows out in *Star Trek: Generations* (#199)



"If you owned a Picasso, would you object if there was a knock at the door and someone said, 'Hello my name's Pablo, I've got a spot of red paint left and I just thought I'd fill in that corner'. I mean, would you say, 'Bigger off?' George is the artist and whatever he wants to do is fine" **Anthony Daniels** puts forward a good case for George Lucas releasing *Star Wars: The Special Editions* (#200)



"LeVar Burton is horrified that I don't have a computer. When I was at his house, he took me to his computer and he logged on, and he typed my name in. He said, 'My God, there have been 600,000 hits on this site'. I said, 'That's not a lot'. He said, 'Yes it is!' I said, 'There are six billion people on the planet - that's not a lot!' **Marina Sirtis** reveals her plans to conquer the World Wide Web (#247)

"The basic problem was that I couldn't believe that the separation of that country according to ethnicity was something I wanted to bother with. The atmosphere in which we lived the last year of our life there before we decided to leave – before the war, actually – was so full of hatred, which filled you with complete horror and terror, and life increasingly became more difficult" Yugoslavian actress Mira Furlan on her exodus from her homeland, before joining *Baby/lon* 5 (#210)





"It was my first experience of episodic television and never again. It was just terrible. I had the worst experience of my life on that. They just shot anything – nobody cared less what happened" **Jenny Agutter** recalls her guest role on *The Six Million Dollar Man* (#42)



"I'm not going to please everybody. There are going to be a lot of people who don't like it, but we hope we please most of the people" **Phillip Segal**, producer of the *Doctor Who* TV movie, knows he's got a tough audience (#212)



"It was accepted that Emma and Steed slept together. Because we didn't have to bother about sex, we just got on with the plot" **Patrick Macnee**... actually, we'd never thought of it in that way! (#67)



"Everyone expected the world of it. If it wasn't Steven Spielberg, and this quite expensive show, people might have sat there and said, 'Hey this isn't quite so bad, and the dolphin is kind of an interesting character'" **Rockne O'Bannon** on reactions to *seaQuest* (#184)



"We hate it! We've seen the pilot, read some of the scripts and... it's just the worst thing that could happen to you as a creative person" **StarGate** producer **Dean Devlin** on the *SGT* TV series (#229)



"I maintain all along that if it wasn't for Gene being a genius at self promotion and having a massive ego about his work and about *Star Trek*, it would have died" **Trek** producer **Herb Solow** on *The Great Bird of the Galaxy* (#235)



"The viewing figures seem to have pleased the sixth floor [at the BBC]" **Producer John Nathan Turner**, just months before *Doctor Who* was cancelled (#113)



"It's taken us three years to get the best story possible for *Highlander 2* and make certain the script is exactly right" **Christopher Lambert** on the appalling *Highlander 2* (#52)



"I think the series is going to work, and by the end of the season, we'll be where we need to be to be picked up" **Executive producer Bryce Zabel** says the omens look good for *Dark Skies*. It was cancelled. (#222)



"It was very, very badly produced. I mean, on a film like this you need a lot of organization and not a lot of bullshit. And there was a lot of bullshit... I just wanted out. The situation was just so untenable" **Terry Gilliam** on directing *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, which went horribly, horribly over budget (#128)



"One of the things the interviewer asked me, she said, 'Is Threepio gay?' I said, 'Well I edit two magazines. One is *Mechanix Rubber Weekly*, the other is *Robots in Bondage*' She said, 'What was that? Robots in Bondage?' They told me never to make jokes in front of Americans again" **Anthony Daniels** on everyone's favourite slightly effete droid (#60)



STARBURST 250⁺ MOVIE REVIEWS

**250 issues; countless Sci-Fi films reviewed.
But did we get it right?**



'Raiders isn't simply a 1981 remake of a 1930s movie but an exhilarating celebration of the entire action/adventure genre, incorporating the pulps, old movie serials and comic books' *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, John Brosnan #37

'Simply one of the hottest, liveliest, most entertaining SF films to come down the freeway in a long time' *Mad Max 2*, John Baxter #45



'A strange, bleak but hypnotic movie that is totally unlike any other Science Fiction film I've ever seen' *Blade Runner*, John Brosnan #50

'You won't see a funnier, more poignant or more romantic Fantasy adventure film this year... I fell hook, line and sinker' *Splash*, Alan Jones #71

'John Carpenter, with this film, has finally arrived' *The Thing*, Phil Edwards #50

'As exciting as Star Wars, and one hundred per cent more original' *Tron*, Phil Edwards, #51

'Makes one aware that we are seeing the first work of a major new talent' *Evil Dead*, Phil Edwards, #52



'I loved it. I was totally manipulated, I laughed, I cried and clapped my way through 95 minutes of it' *ET*, Richard Hollis #53

'There are moments of such compelling intensity that will undoubtedly stagger even the most jaded of palates' *Videodrome*, Alan Jones #59

'It may not be everyone's idea of a Superman film, but I loved every last minute' *Superman III*, Alan Jones #62

'RoboCop is sensational - there is just no other word to describe it' *RoboCop*, Alan Jones #113



'A cinematic dynamo. It's a powerhouse Sci-Fi action adventure which is undeniably the most thrill-packed movie-going experience for ages' *The Terminator*, Alan Jones #78

'Winning, audacious entertainment, which blissfully confounds all expectations' *Highlander*, Alan Jones #95

'An impressively scary debut from a deliriously imaginative director who has the courage of his convictions' *Hellraiser*, Alan Jones #108

'Mature entertainment on a grand scale, soaring with inspired lunacy yet saying something important about the war between men and women' *The Witches of Eastwick*, Alan Jones #110

'The freshest, most ingenious Fantasy enchantment to be seen in the Eighties' *Beetlejuice*, Alan Jones #119

'Warm, funny and full of remarkable insights marking it as one of this year's movie-going delights' *big*, Alan Jones #122

'Zemeckis brings off the entertainment coup of the decade' *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, Alan Jones #124

'Gilliam's ravishing feast for the eyes, ears and mind is exactly my idea of what European filmmakers should be aspiring to in order to counteract the increasingly homogenized American Fantasy product' *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, Alan Jones #127



'Batman fulfilled every one of my expectations. Tim Burton is now the greatest director working in the genre and *Batman* is an eye-popping masterpiece' *Batman*, Alan Jones #132

'Everybody concerned looks like they had a ball making *Bill and Ted*, you can often catch the actors grinning unguardedly in the background, and this happy-go-lucky sense of fun transfers itself well through the fourth wall' *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, Alan Jones #140



'Cameron's voyage to the bottom of the sea for a close encounter of the wet kind is heart-stopping excitement on a grand scale and an awesome achievement technically, logically and emotionally' **The Abyss**, Alan Jones #134

'At practically every turn Zemeckis's Fantasy seems in danger of disappearing up its own Time tunnel. But his tight, relentless grip on the multi-faceted scenario pulls it through time after time' **Back to the Future Part II**, Alan Jones #137



'It moves like lightning and offers sheer enjoyment over carefully planned step of the way' **Tremors**, Alan Jones #142

'A fabulous roller-coaster ride – a slam-bang, thank you Amie, slice of high-energy Science Fiction' **Total Recall**, Alan Jones #144



'A shamelessly romantic, supernatural thriller that will tear your heart out with such emotional force, you'll be reduced to a quivering wreck by the time the final credits roll' **Ghost**, Alan Jones #146

'This eight-legged Jaws is a stunning slice of ecologically-based Science Fantasy crammed with black comedy and Black Widows' **Arachnophobia**, Alan Jones #149

'A vastly entertaining comic-book adventure certain to jet propel viewers back to their childhood fantasies' **Rocketeer**, Alan Jones #156



'Cameron, the Stormin' Norman of Sci-Fi cinema, plies on the gutsy grit, hard-edged humour and seamlessly orchestrated high decibel pace and chase elements for the best roller-coaster ride this year' **Terminator 2**, Alan Jones #157

'It's further proof of Terry Gilliam's eerie knack to wring visionary heart-lugging power from unsentimental, whacked-out material' **The Fisher King**, Alan Jones #159



'Tim Burton is God in my opinion. But even deities have their off days' **Batman Returns**, Alan Jones #169

'It gives back, and reinforces, the integrity of the Stoker original after decades of cinematic misuse' **Bram Stoker's Dracula**, Alan Jones #173

'A breath of fresh scare and every bit as scary as **The Silence of the Lambs**' **Candyman**, Alan Jones #174

'There's a lot that's bad in this second sequel to Ridley Scott's classic haunted house ride and it's undoubtedly the gloomiest, most miserable nightmare of the trilogy. Yet it's also the bravest in many respects' **Alien 3**, Alan Jones #169

'If this is indeed the final adventure for the old Enterprise crew it's absolutely everything it had to be; funny, inventive, exciting, nostalgic, thrilling, sentimental, politically correct, loving and utterly brilliant' **Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country**, Alan Jones #163

'Heltraiser III is the business. It's sly, funny, fast-paced, disturbing, nasty and exciting. Who could ask for anything more' **Heltraiser III**, Alan Jones #167



'It may not have ET's heart, CE3K's sense of wonder or Raiders of the Lost Ark's streak of knowing humour, yet Jurassic Park has what [Spielberg's] films have lacked since Jaws. Bite' **Jurassic Park**, Alan Jones #179

'Montaged, fast paced and quick cut to within an inch of its MTV life, **Demolition Man** is as disasposable as a bic razor, and equally adept at delivering close shaves' **Demolition Man**, Alan Jones #187

'Proyas's "in your face" graphic novel on celluloid is a highly acceptable addition to this year's comic character roll call' **The Crow**, Alan Jones #189

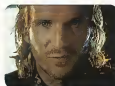
'Emerges from the wreckage of rumour and speculation as a truly monumental Fantasy watershed' **Waterworld**, Alan Jones #205



'Action-packed, emotionally-charged Science Fiction... as entertaining as a flight-simulation ride at Disneyland' **StarGate**, Alan Jones #196

'Ed Wood may be Burton's first stateside flop but it's his greatest success for grateful Fantasy fans' **Ed Wood**, Alan Jones #199

'The 007 franchise is back on a firm track and looks set to run for another 30 years at least on the strength of the superstar superspy's latest globetrotting saga' **GoldenEye**, Alan Jones #208



'The story doesn't lock in until way past the first hour, yet you won't care. You'll just be rooted to your seat, galvanized, glued to the screen by the cacophony of images in wide-eyed admiration' **Strange Days**, Alan Jones #209

'This anti-Science Fiction drama is Gilliam's most conceptually amazing movie because it cleverly weaves together numerous levels of reality to tell its post-apocalyptic Hitchcockian tale' **Twelve Monkeys**, Alan Jones #212

'I loved **Scream** for its delinquent self-reflective stance, its sheer cheek, its sophisticated parodies of everything we adore about Horror and its unconditional love of the slice and dice glory years' **Scream**, Alan Jones #223



'An incandescent blend of everything the genre has to offer, done with Besson's deft flair and perverse taste, this has to be the movie of the year' **The Fifth Element**, Alan Jones #226

'Connery's humour is more relaxed and the innuendos that spill out whenever an attractive woman thrusts herself at him seem perfectly natural' **Never Say Never Again**, Richard Hollis #66

'A gargantuan scaled mixture of Fifties-style alien invader SF and Irwin Allen-type '70s disaster epics drenched in Nineties-style *Die Hard* action and high tech special effects' **Independence Day**, Alan Jones #216



'It's Science Fiction in the best coupling of those two words' **Contact**, Alan Jones #230

'There may be a nagging sense of déjà vu about the whole gargantuan enterprise – especially the now customary sudden dinosaur introductions – but these feelings never get in the way of the overpowering visceral excitement or shock treatment served up in deliciously scary dollops' **The Lost World: Jurassic Park**, Alan Jones, #227

'Stands as a testament to Trek's enduring resilience – and future potential' **Star Trek: First Contact**, Melissa Perenson #220

'Too, too much – a Bri-Nylon Fantasy that is a must-see for spy movie fans who'll adore all the smart and constantly surprising references' **Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery**, Alan Jones #229

'A very intriguing, effective and highly entertaining scare-fest' **Mimic**, Alan Jones #234



'A brilliant movie: tight, compressed and with a singularity of purpose' **Cube**, Alan Jones #237

'Leder lets all the emotional and visual fireworks emanate from this rock solid core and the result will have as deep an impact on your feelings as on your sense of wonder' **Deep Impact**, Alan Jones #238

'The only effects that are really special are the ones that will be playing on your emotions long after you've left the cinema' **City of Angels**, Alan Jones #239



'A perfect movie is a rare occurrence indeed. But that's what **The Truman Show** is. See it, embrace it, praise it and love it, because it's a bona fide classic' **The Truman Show**, Alan Jones #240

'Some of its gags seem rather adult for a U certificate. Buck to Wilma Deering on the couch – 'After 500 years I've got to go easy on re-entry!' **Buck Rogers**, Benny Aldrich #13



'As a Science Fiction film it's seriously flawed, but as a horror film it works perfectly' **Alien**, John Brosnan #14

'For all its flaws – and most of the flaws involve the cast – **Saturn 3** is still something of a major achievement' **Saturn 3**, John Brosnan #23



'Empire lacks a satisfactory focus – in **Star Wars** this was provided by the Death Star and I was slightly surprised at how much I was aware of its absence' **The Empire Strikes Back**, John Brosnan #23



'Close Encounters isn't a movie that can be examined logically – you just have to watch it with your forebrain switched off' **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**, John Brosnan #28

'The main source of interest comes from seeing how the Western clichés are going to be translated into Science Fiction clichés. Sometimes it's done with a heartening touch of originality, at other times it's depressing in its banality' **Battle Beyond the Stars**, John Brosnan #31

'Inseminoid is not faultless by any means. It is often predictable and downright ridiculous. I'm still questioning for example that chainsaws will be such a prominent feature on future Space programmes' **Inseminoid**, Alan Jones #34

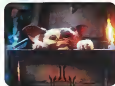
'A family Horror movie designed to offend as few people as possible and to appeal to the majority' **Pottergeist**, John Brosnan #50

'As rip-offs go it's very good' **Android**, John Brosnan #55

'Overall it's an entertaining framework, sickly made, amusing and scary by turns. If it is not a complete success, then the fault lies more with the limiting format, not the talent involved' **Twilight Zone: The Movie**, Phil Edwards #64

'And so the Stephen King blandwagon rolls on. **Firestarter** was perhaps the most filmable of King's books. However, the movie version turns out to be the most mediocre adaptation so far' **Firestarter**, Alan Jones #72

'Nothing more than a lot of character studies revolving around the qualities of friendship and commitment. Sorry Trekkers but you need a lot more than that to make a film work in the 1980s' **Star Trek III: The Search for Spock**, Alan Jones #73



'Best described as **The Evil Dead** for kids' **Gremlins**, Alan Jones #77

'A failure on certain levels it may be, but it is also without doubt one of the most audacious and intriguing fantasies to come our way in a long time' **Brazil**, Alan Jones #80

'Nothing more than a Saturday Night Live sketch done on a \$30 million budget, but apart from a lapse in pacing during its central section, it can't be faulted' **Ghostbusters**, Alan Jones #77



'Suspenseful and eye-crunching for all its routine pot-boiling' **Fortress**, Alan Jones #176

'This Joel Schumacher directed effort is quite servicable and, more often than not, entertaining in a no-brainer, roller-coaster ride sort of way' **Batman Forever**, Marc Shapiro #203

'Petersen's pestilence parade merely degenerates into nothing more than an update of such Fifties SF schlock as **The Blob**' **Outbreak**, Alan Jones #201



'All dressed up and nowhere interesting to go, Neil Jordan's lavish adaptation of Anne Rice's cult novel turns out to be a very average vampire tale' **Interview With the Vampire**, Alan Jones #198

'This film, while never truly awful, fails because there is rarely more than a megabite or two of homage to the source material' **Judge Dredd**, Alan Jones #204

'Men in Black isn't as cool, or clever as it so clearly thinks it is. It's just another action flick given a market researched right-angle twist and a superficially hip sheen' **Men in Black**, Alan Jones #228

'A fun Fantasy pot-boiler' **The Devil's Advocate**, Alan Jones #233



'The acting is absolutely terrible and the script is barely there, yet the special effects are truly sensational and the main reason to see the movie' **Starship Troopers**, Alan Jones #233

'An initially rousing adventure that winds up not packing enough punch to sustain its elongated running time' **Tomorrow Never Dies**, Alan Jones #233

'The scare fresher is sprayed in rather diluted fashion around this outing which wants its carnage candy and be able to eat it too' **Scream 2**, Alan Jones #236



'Despite its occasional static stretches, lapses in logic and perfunctory false premises, I enjoyed Levinson's gaudy Under-World' **Sphere**, Alan Jones #236

'When something is supposed to be so awful, it never really is as wretched as all that in reality. And that's certainly the case with **The Postman**' **The Postman**, Alan Jones #236

'A typical jingoistic juggernaut from the mucho macho Jerry Bruckheimer production factory' **Armageddon**, Alan Jones #241

'File under Xciting and Xceptional if you're a fan; Xtraneous and Xastepating if you're not' **The X-Files**, Alan Jones #241

'Species II is absolute rubbish but I had a great time watching it' **Species II**, Alan Jones #241

'You must see it for the technical wizardry on respondent display, and some reasonably humorous nostalgic sit-com schtick, but don't expect to feel anything more than what the title astutely refers to' **Pleasantville**, Alan Jones #245

'Insurrection merely marks time for the **Trek** features with warmed-over scraps from the TV series... Everyone will have to try harder if the franchise is to live long and prosper' **Star Trek: Insurrection**, Alan Jones #246

'Take the daft B-movie dialogue, the **Jurassic Park** inferences and the culture clash inconsistencies with a pinch of salt as big as Joe himself and a good time can be had by all' **Mighty Joe Young**, Alan Jones #246

'The humour is on a level that makes the average **Carry On** film look positively sophisticated' **Moonraker**, John Brosnan #13



'Instead of doing the logical thing – giving the fans what they want, a picture about their favourite characters – the Paramount executives apparently decided to try and outdo **Star Wars** and **Close Encounters**...On the whole it is slow, boring and even turgid at times' **Star Trek: The Motion Picture**, John Brosnan #19

'A hermetically sealed, germ-free, ultra-safe kiddick at least two reels too long' **Innerspace**, Alan Jones #112



'It's a better than average, slick super-shocker that is as warped and twisted as anyone could wish' **A Nightmare on Elm Street**, Alan Jones #85

'Succeeds on a wham-bang visceral level and doesn't even attempt anything else' **Predator**, Alan Jones #113



'When Lucas couldn't secure the rights to **The Lord of the Rings** he decided to create his own mythic Tolkienian universe and result is Willow – oops, **Willow**, Alan Jones #124

'Although you have to dig deep to unearth the wayward qualities contained in **The Final Frontier**, the battered treasures are there to be found' **Star Trek V: The Final Frontier**, Alan Jones #132

'It's the same old likeable high spirited silliness, needing nil effort to watch or enjoy' **Ghostbusters 2**, Alan Jones #136



'There is a NASA technical advisor listed in the credits but there's no indication that anyone listened to a word he may have said' *Meteor*, John Brosnan #19

'It has the intellectual weight of a pea' *The Black Hole*, John Brosnan #19

'I think younger audiences are going to realize pretty quickly that they're being patronized by this movie and all the "nudge-nudge" type humour it contains. I could be wrong of course' *Flash Gordon*, John Brosnan #28



'Somewhere in Time, like its central character, is out of its proper time and place. It's an interesting experiment, and a brave one, but one that was doomed to fail in 1981' *Somewhere in Time*, John Brosnan #31



'The SF element in Outland is totally unnecessary – it plays no part in the story and has no real reason for being there' *Outland*, John Brosnan #37

'It isn't that *Labyrinth* is a dreadful film, it's just very dull' *Labyrinth*, Alan Jones #110

'The truth is that Carpenter, with this film, blows more opportunities to wind up suspense than he takes up' *Escape from New York*, Phil Edwards #38

'Seems to me as if one of the old scripts has merely been dusted down for the new film, or at best, one of the scripts never shot when the TV series was junked in 1969' *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, Tony Crawley #47



'The film serves as a kind of trailer to the novel: a package of edited highlights with no substance' *Dune*, John Brosnan #79

'So little happens for the first hour that I began to wonder if I was watching a rough cut of the film' *Cat People*, Phil Edwards #47

'Conan is terrible, a truly disappointing movie from beginning to end' *Conan*, Phil Edwards #47

'The movie is a disaster on every count' *Swamp Thing*, Alan Jones #47

'The most horrifying thing about *Creepshow* is watching Stephen King trying to act' *Creepshow*, Phil Edwards #53



'A dull, posturing, pretentious bore masquerading as a harrowing mystery' *Jacob's Ladder*, Alan Jones #149



'The celluloid equivalent of safe sex; a Tesco version of the Salkinds' series which drowns Chris Reeve's original storyline in a tidal wave of poor production values, outrageously bad special effects, and editing which may have tied up all the continuity errors but leave little else – like coherent plot – remaining' *Superman 4*, Alan Jones #109

'Actually boring' *The Dark Crystal*, Phil Edwards #56



'The Indy saga is sagging. Not a patch on *Raiders* and only marginally better than *Temple of Doom*, *The Last Crusade* is nothing more than an inferior clone of the original' *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Alan Jones #131

'The film version of Whitley Strieber's best selling novel isn't so much a motion picture as an art attack' *The Hunger*, Alan Jones #60



'A pop art endurance test, an endless psychedelic *Krypton Factor* with loud music blaring out incessantly... Excruciating, bum-shifting, punk junk' *Tank Girl*, Alan Jones #202

'Sonnenfeld's deathless approach is static and he puts the final nail in the coffin by embalming the recycled one-liners into something resembling *Carry On Screaming*. Except you don't' *The Addams Family*, Alan Jones #161

'Moore is now much too old [and overweight] for the role and at times looks faintly ridiculous, especially in the love scenes' *Octopussy*, John Brosnan #61



'Film-making by numbers – no imagination, at least in the script department' *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*, Phil Edwards #61

'A turkey of such epic proportions I feel like leaving this review at that and not wasting my time or yours by going on further' *Supergirl*, Alan Jones #73

'A Fantasy *Flashdance* – something I can do without, thank you' *Electric Dreams*, Alan Jones #77



'A by-the-numbers affair with generic dialogue you'd swear appeared in comic balloons' *Universal Soldier*, Alan Jones #169

'It's a shattering, horrible, depressing, mega-disappointment and one *Highlander* fans should sue over' *Highlander 2*, Alan Jones #152



'Praise Croneberg and pass the Vaporal' *The Fly II*, Alan Jones #132

'Warren Beatty's comic-strip-tease is huge globs of extravagant style with absolutely no substance or story whatsoever' *Dick Tracy*, Alan Jones #144

'Simply a narrative device for Weller, Noonan and O'Herlihy to battle relentlessly, repetitively and violently' *RoboCop 2*, Alan Jones #146



'Everyone involved in this tired, predictable rehash should be apologizing profusely' *Childs Play 2*, Alan Jones #150



'This dumb derivative debacle is minimalist, ultraviolent trash of the worst kind' *Predator 2*, Alan Jones #152

'What a pathetic waste of \$80 million' *Hook*, Alan Jones #164



'No, it's not as bad as you've heard. It's worse' *Last Action Hero*, Alan Jones #180

'What happened? Did all creativity run out when they thought of the sequel title?' *Addams Family Values*, Alan Jones #185



'Total trash from start to finish... I suppose it fills the Alien gap while we wait in anticipation for another episode in that far superior species series' *Species*, Alan Jones #207

'An oppressive viewing experience... Everyone involved bytes off more than they can chew' *Johnny Mnemonic*, Alan Jones #209



'A humourless helping of low tone exploitation that doesn't even have the saving grace of being camp on the pneumatic Playboy parody front' *Barb Wire*, Alan Jones #214

'The only screams you'll hear in the empty cinema space are your own ones of boredom' *Screamers*, Alan Jones #216

'Inept and unexciting to a quite shocking degree, *Escape From LA* is routine even by Carpenter's low standards of late' *Escape From LA*, Alan Jones #218

'What's up Doc? Sadly everything' *Space Jam*, Alan Jones #223

'Holy depressing fiasco! Embroidering on all the worst possible aspects of *Batman Forever*, director Joel Schumacher's second attempt at lightening up the Dark Knight's adventures can only be described as a comic strip *Starlight Express*' *Batman and Robin*, Alan Jones #228

'If this Tate Gallery exhibition is indeed what dreams may come, then move over Satan, I'm heading your way' *What Dreams May Come*, Alan Jones #244

'An empty lumbering spectacular, turning Leslie Charteris's gallant law-breaker into a cat-burgling James Bond clone' *The Saint*, Alan Jones #225

'Thanks, but no thanks. I'll stick with the original film in its incomplete ragged form' *Star Wars: The Special Edition*, Alan Jones #223



'Tim Burton's unintended lampoon of *Independence Day* is a total mess. A glorious one it must be said, but one that often looks like encroaching on Ed Wood territory at far too many moments for its own good' *Mars Attacks*, Alan Jones #222



'Danger, Danger... give this modernized saga of the Jupiter 2 and the Space Family Robinson a wide berth' *Lost in Space*, Ian Calcutt #239

'Toho's celebrated 'King of the Monsters' crashes and burns as the first casualty of the SF summer... *Godzilla* isn't *Godzilla* - not as we know him' *Godzilla*, Alan Jones #240

'A flat bore, a total waste of everyone's time, energy and money' *The Avengers*, Alan Jones #242

The Best of Brosnan

For years the pointed word processor of John Brosnan has instilled fear in the hearts of producers, directors, TV executives and **Star Trek** fans everywhere. Never afraid to say exactly what he thinks, John has kept the *Starburst* letters page lively for years. At the risk of re-opening some long-healed wounds, we thought we'd revisit some of Brosnan's best. **Star Trek** fans – do not read any further!

BROSNAN ON TREK:

'*Star Trek*, the TV show that has done for the Science Fiction genre what *Barbara Cartland* has done for literature' – #48

BROSNAN ON SPOCK'S DEATH IN *THE WRATH OF KHAN*:

'I couldn't help being reminded of a similar scene in *The Big Bus*' – #49

BROSNAN ON *STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK*:

'At the end of the movie, when the lights came on, I expected to see all the Trekkies on their hands and knees, heads bowed and chanting, 'Praise be to Spock...' Perhaps they save that sort of thing for the privacy of their homes and convention hotel' – #76

BROSNAN ON *STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER*:

'I still haven't seen *Star Trek IV* but I did weaken and go and see *Crocodile Dundee II*' – #107

BROSNAN ON *DOCTOR WHO*:

'Badly written, badly acted, downright patronizing, obviously done on a budget which didn't run into double figures and lousy Science Fiction to boot' – #128

BROSNAN ON *LAND OF THE GIANTS*:

'Harry has sadly disbanded his Land of the Giants fan club. He read in *New Scientist* that watching the show destroys brain cells at twice the rate drinking neat scotch does' – #143

BROSNAN ON IT'S ONLY A MOVIE:

'I've actually seen a movie since I wrote the last column' – #153

BROSNAN ON *HOOK*:

'Before seeing Spielberg's *Hook* I was fairly ambivalent on the subject of children. I've never wanted any of my own but was willing to allow other people to produce the little brats if they wanted; now, after watching *Hook*, I am starting a campaign to have children banned' – #163

BROSNAN ON *STAR TREK VI*:

'*Star Trek: The Undiscovered Country* has to be my favourite *Star Trek* movie. Why? Well, that's obvious: because it's the last *Star Trek* movie, thank God!' – #164

BROSNAN ON *SEAQUEST DSV*:

'*seaQuest DSV* is crap. The pilot was crap and the two subsequent episodes I viewed were crap. And we're talking serious crap' – #187

BROSNAN ON *GODZILLA*:

'There's clearly something wrong with me but I have to admit that I actually enjoyed *Godzilla*. No really' – #241



DAVID RICHARDSON (Editor)

MOVIES:

Blade Runner
Aliens
The Matrix
The Empire Strikes Back
Terminator 2

TELEVISION:

Timeslip: Time of the Ice Box
Star Trek: TNG:
Yesterday's Enterprise
Star Trek: TNG:
Cause and Effect
Babylon 5: War Without End
Buffy The Vampire Slayer:
Passion

ASTRID SCHON (Production Assistant)

MOVIES:

Gods and Monsters
The Truman Show
The Matrix
Star Wars
Independence Day

TELEVISION:

The X-Files: Humbug
The X-Files: Home
The X-Files: Bad Blood
Doctor Who:
Seeds of Doom
Buffy The Vampire Slayer:
The Zeppo

PAUL SPRAGG (Production Assistant)

MOVIES:

Ghostbusters
Star Trek: First Contact
Twelve Monkeys
Back to the Future
Starship Troopers

TELEVISION:

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:
Trials and Tribble-ations
The X-Files:
Clyde Bruckman's
Final Repose
Babylon 5: War Without End
Red Dwarf: Kryten
LEXX: I Worship His Shadow

TIM LENG (Graphics)

MOVIES:

ST II: The Wrath of Khan
ST: Insurrection
Batman (1989)
Return of the Jedi
Aliens

TELEVISION:

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:
Trials and Tribble-ations
Star Trek:
Operation - Annihilate!
Space: Above and Beyond:
Tell Our Moms
We Done Our Best
The X-Files: Bad Blood
Dark Skies: Shades of Gray

GRAHAM MILLER (Graphics)

MOVIES:

Star Wars: Episode One
(Haven't seen it yet but I believe it to be my favourite)
Blade Runner
Independence Day
Aliens
Star Wars: A New Hope

TELEVISION:

Star Trek: TNG:
Best of Both Worlds
The X-Files:
Two Fathers/One Son
Doctor Who: Seeds of Doom
Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:
Sacrifice of Angels
Futurama: Space Pilot 3000

JUDY SLOANE (LA office)

MOVIES:

The Empire Strikes Back
Close Encounters of the Third Kind
Star Trek IV:
The Voyage Home
Terminator 2
The Matrix

TELEVISION:

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine:
Trials and Tribble-ations
Star Trek: The City on the Edge of Forever
Star Trek: Spectre of the Gun

Starburst Sci-Fi Heaven



It's an impossible task: to choose the Top Five Movies and TV episodes of all time. Even so, the *Starburst* crew have had a bash...

Star Trek: TNG:
Elementary, Dear Data
Star Trek: Voyager:
Future's End

DEANNE HOLOING (Group Production Assistant)

MOVIES:
Mars Attacks!
Close Encounters of the Third Kind (Original)
Terminator 2
The Empire Strikes Back
Willow

TELEVISION:
Babylon 5: Severed Dreams
Blake's 7: Blake
Doctor Who: Warriors Gate
Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Children of Time
Ultraviolet
Any episode

DAVID HOWE (Contributing Editor)

MOVIES:
Suspria
The Shining
The Fifth Element
Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery
Dracula Prince of Darkness

TELEVISION:
The Outer Limits: Demon with a Glass Hand
The Outer Limits: Quality of Mercy
Sapphire and Steel (Photographs)
Doctor Who:
Talons of Weng-Chiang
Lost in Space:
The Keeper

ALAN JONES (Contributing Editor)

MOVIES:
Inferno
Psycho (1960)
Danger: Diabolik
Carrie
The Truman Show

TELEVISION:
The Avengers:
A Touch of Brimstone
The Outer Limits: The Zanli Misfits
The X-Files: Squeeze
Lost in Space: Trip Through the Robot
Thunderbirds: Any episode

DAVID BASSOM (Videofile)

MOVIES:
Star Wars
The Empire Strikes Back
Raiders of the Lost Ark
E.T. - The Extraterrestrial
Back to the Future

TELEVISION:
Star Trek: TNG: The Best of Both Worlds
Babylon 5: Endgame
Star Trek: Journey to Babel
Quantum Leap: M.I.A.
Battlestar Galactica: Saga of a Star World

JOHN BROSNAH (It's Only a Movie)

MOVIES:
Forbidden Planet
2001: A Space Odyssey
The Haunting
Mad Max 2
Aliens
(TV episodes declined)

IAN CALCUTT (Things to Come)

MOVIES:
King Kong (1933)
The Incredible Shrinking Man
Videodrome
Bride of Frankenstein
Cat People (1942)
(TV episodes declined)

GARY FENTON (Cybertech)

MOVIES:
Austin Powers
StarGate
Star Trek: First Contact
Terminator 2
2010: Odyssey Two
(TV episodes declined)

STEPHEN PAYNE (Group Editor)

MOVIES:
The Time Machine
Total Recall
Star Trek II: Wrath of Khan
Silent Running
Star Wars: A New Hope

TELEVISION:
Doctor Who: The Chase
Star Trek: TNG: Yesterday's Enterprise
Star Trek: The Cage
Quatermass and the Pit
Babylon 5: War Without End

JAN VINCENT RUDZKI (Deputy Group Editor)

MOVIES:
Close Encounters of the Third Kind
A Matter of Life and Death
Forbidden Planet
The Day the Earth Stood Still
The Bride of Frankenstein

TELEVISION:

Doctor Who:
An Unearthly Child
Babylon 5: any arc-revelation episode (what a cop-out...)
Battlestar Galactica: War of the Gods 2
Star Trek: Requiem for Methuselah
Lost in Space:
Invaders from the Fifth Dimension

JERRY CHEUNG (IT Manager)

MOVIES:
The Matrix
Ghost in the Shell
Aliens
Blade Runner
Austin Powers

TELEVISION:
Babylon 5: The Coming of Shadows
Xena: Warrior Princess: Callisto
The X-Files: José Chung's 'From Outer Space'
The Simpsons: Deep Space Homer
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: The Zeppo

So there are our views... but what are yours? Let's hear them! Please send your Top Five choices to the *Starburst* Feedback page, and we'll print them in future issues!



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#204 - £2.99 (\$4.99)

The X-Files stars Witch Plaggi and Nic Lee, Lulu Ward on Doctor Who, Star Trek: The Next Generation writer Ron Moore, Johnny Mermore



Sold Out



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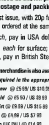
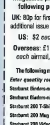
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Star Trek Deep Space Nine, making of Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country, Brian Koppelman, Rick O'Connell





GIDEON

The Fight for Survival



As TNT's beleaguered *Crusade* prepares to launch, star Gary Cole briefs *Starburst* on the short mission that lies ahead. By Joe Nazzaro

FSCOTT FITZGERALD once wrote, 'Show me a hero and I will write you a tragedy.' That statement would most definitely apply to Captain Matthew Gideon, captain of the Excalibur in the long-awaited Babylon 5 spin-off, *Crusade*. When Earth is struck by an alien plague that threatens to destroy all life within five years, Gideon is the Earthforce captain who is given command of a prototype destroyer-class ship, the Excalibur, and despatched to the fringes of the known universe on a desperate search for the cure.

It's the final day of filming on *The Needs of Earth*, the first episode of *Crusade* to be recorded, and actor Gary Cole has just finished a dramatic scene that probably best describes Gideon and his mercurial personality. Dr Chambers, the ship's medical officer (played by Marjean Holden) has just reviewed a collection of a data crystals that are supposed to contain the important knowledge of the alien Moradi. Instead of scientific or technical data, the crystals actually hold music, poetry, songs; the creative output of an entire planet. ▶

"You could recognize that a good writer was behind this. It had a good sense of humour, it was unusual"

► Gideon's response: "Nothing... useful then." When Chambers counters by asking if he would go into a burning building to save the Mona Lisa, the captain's response is a flat, "No". Right now, he tells her, their priority is focusing on the needs of Earth. It's that kind of thought-provoking philosophical discussion that first attracted Cole to the role of Gideon and quickly showed him that *Crusade* could be more than Space battles and bug-eyed aliens.

"First of all, it was good writing," he explains, "and you could recognize that a good writer was behind this. It had a good sense of humour, it was clever, it was unusual, and it was also a genre that I've not been involved with before, so that was attractive to me. I've never done anything like that, aside from *American Gothic*, which was Fantasy-like, and that was kind of interesting."

Into Space

Playing the lead role in a new SF action-adventure series has presented a unique set of challenges for Cole in terms of finding experiences to draw from as an actor. Not having spent any time in outer Space himself, the actor simply had to find enough information in the first handful of scripts to establish his character. "That's your job, there has to be," he insists. "You have to choose that there is and play it."

"When you do episodic or you're on a series, you will become clearer the more work you do, the more shows, and the more scenes you do, and obviously you'll get a feeling for it. It's tough to walk in, but this is different for me; it's a Fantasy and it's not something you can use your experiences to prepare you for. If you play a bartender, I've played a bartender before, but I've never been a starship captain, so you have to rely more on your imagination than experience. You have to take those circumstances and make them as real and believable as you can."

The original casting breakdown for Captain Gideon described the



The Exaltist crew (left) Jennifer Lien (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist), Ethan Phillips (The Exaltist).



Investigating the Morali in *The Needs of Earth*



On the attack in *Visitors From Down the Street*

"I've never been a starship captain, so you have to rely more on your imagination than experience"

character as a ruggedly handsome man with 'character in his face from years of peering into alien sunrises'. A non-conformist, he is capable and intelligent, and has a very dry sense of humour. Regarded by his superiors as a bit of a romantic, they don't believe he's hard-edged enough to be a truly dependable officer, but when the Draik plague strikes, Gideon's years as an explorer-class ship captain make him the best man for the job.

While those bits of information might outline the character on a factual level, Cole maintains that he still doesn't have an emotional starting point for Gideon in his head, at least at this early juncture. "It's not as tangible as that; I do, but it's a little more abstract, and it comes upon me based on what I see scene by scene or line by line. I've never really worked in terms of that; I've always worked in terms of an instinct of behaviour based on what is in the script. I'm not real big on, 'Another life'. In terms of scenarios other than what I see here, I don't really imagine in those terms."

Cole mining

If there's one thing that Gary Cole brings to his work, it's the ability to create a thoroughly believable character even in the most unlikely of surroundings. Whether it's the demonic Sheriff Lucas Buck in the short-lived supernatural drama *American Gothic* or the so-square-he's-bip-like Brady in the two retro-sitcom *Brady Bunch* movies, Cole's characters are always totally convincing. That is no doubt due to Cole's extensive theatre background, which includes productions of *Mother Courage*, *True West*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Bang*, *Orphans* and *Harry Moon* and *Night* to name just a few. Cole's television credits are also impressive, including *Fall From Grace*, *When Love Kills*, *Echoes in the Darkness*, *Son of the Morningstar*, *From the Earth to the Moon* and *Fatal Vision* (in which Cole played the real-life accused murderer, Dr Jeffrey MacDonald) and the series *Midnight Caller*.

On the feature front, the actor has appeared in a wide range of films, notably in *The Line of Fire*, *Cyclops Baby*, *Santa Fe*, *I'll Be Home For Christmas* and, most recently, director Sam Raimi's *A Simple Plan* and the comedy *Idle Space* for King of the Hill creator Mike Judge.

"You could recognize that a good writer was behind this. It had a good sense of humour, it was unusual"

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The original casting breakdown for Captain Gideon described the



The *Enterprise* crew (and friend): Doreena (Cerie Robles), Galen (Peter Woodward), Max (David Alan Brooks), Lechley (Tracy Scoggins), Matheson (Daniel Dae Kim) and Dr. Chambers (Marjorie Halkerston)



Investigating the Moradi in *The Needs of Earth*



character as a ruggedly handsome man with 'character in his face from years of peering into alien sunrises'. A non-conformist, he is capable and intelligent, and has a very dry sense of humor. Regarded by his superiors as a bit of a romantic, they don't believe he's hard-edged enough to be a truly dependable officer, but when the Draak plague strikes, Gideon's years as an explorer-class ship captain make him the best man for the job.

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On the attack in *Visitors From Down the Street*

"I've never been a starship captain, so you have to rely more on your imagination than experience"

"He's obsessed about the task... he's also carrying some bags from the past, and that affects his psyche"

► Cole had in fact recently finished *Office Space* and was doing a play in Chicago when he was first approached by the producers of *Crusade* to play Captain Gideon. The project sounded interesting, and there was the added incentive of not having to audition for the role. "It depends on the project," the actor claims, "sometimes that happens and sometimes it doesn't, but I don't know of anyone that enjoys auditioning. Sometimes you can have fun depending on the material and the people involved, but it's certainly always easier just to get a phone call."

An internal actor by nature, Cole is somewhat reluctant to give too much away about how he sees this character of Gideon. "I think he's cautious about anything that's personal," he finally offers, "and he's obsessed about the task at hand; I think he's fairly driven by that, but he's also carrying some bags from the past, and I think that affects a lot of his psyche."

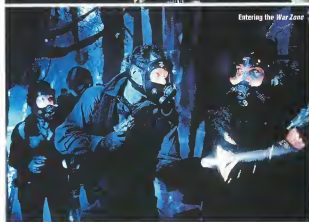
The shades of Gideon

Having already established that Gideon is a dark character, it remains to be seen just how dark. On a scale of one to 10 for example, with Mike Brady being a 'one' and Lucas Buck being a '10', how dark is the character? Cole chuckles. "Right now, from what I can see, on the surface, he might appear to be a five, but I think he's probably more like a seven, maybe even an eight on a bad day. I think he's aware of that, and there's the possibility of being self-destructive, that his attitude could have adverse effects on a lot of things, so I think he keeps it at bay, but that's the main conflict within himself, based on an incident from his past."

According to series creator J Michael Straczynski, the actor's appraisal is pretty much on the correct side. "What will eventually come out about his character is that his ship, the Cerberus, was destroyed by a ship he had never seen before, and he devoted a large part of his life very quietly to finding out what this ship was and where it came from so he can do what he has to do to get back at them. He's the lone



Strange aliens drop by in *Visitors From Down the Street*



Entering the War Zone

Casting the Captain

"We looked at a lot of people," recalls *Crusade's* executive producer Doug Netter. "We screened actor after actor after actor, and if we had one casting session, we had a dozen or more, so what we did was cull through everybody: the actors who aren't quite well-known, the actors who are better known, and stars like Gary Cole. When we got through the process, we decided together that this was the actor we would like, and we presented that to the appropriate liaison at both TNT and Warner Bros. and they were very positive."



"In fact, they were very pleasantly surprised that we could attract an actor that was that good, because some actors do not identify with SF. Gary had never done SF, but he identified with it. He had read the scripts, and he loved the first couple that Joe wrote. Joe, John [Copeland] and I flew into Chicago and we had dinner with him, which went exceptionally well, followed by breakfast the next morning, and by then, we believed we had the right guy, and I think Gary believed he had the right assignment. I think he's a fine actor, a very thoughtful actor, and I think he's going to bring his own distinctive abilities to the part."



World killers: The Drakh



Cole in *American Gothic*



and *The Brady Bunch*

survivor of his ship; he was an executive officer at the time, so with that information, you will see the sort of Captain Ahab part of him come out, where he will not stop until he exacts whatever proper retribution he feels must be paid by those forces involved. He has a dark side to him, certainly; he does hide things, and he lies when he has to. He also has this Apocalypse Box, which he conceals from just about everybody, and if you hide something, there must be a reason to hide it, so I think Gary's perception is more or less correct."

That said, there are aspects of Gideon's character that easily change and develop in subsequent episodes of *Crusade*, so Cole isn't about to go out on an emotional limb at this early juncture. "I could talk to you four or five months from now and have a different, certainly more detailed view of the character. You could ask me several questions right now about what this character would do in a certain situation, and unless it figured in a specific scene that Joe determined what happened, I don't know if I'd have those answers, but four months from now, you could probably ask me a list of behaviour questions and I would have strong, vivid ideas about them. You'd know from experience."

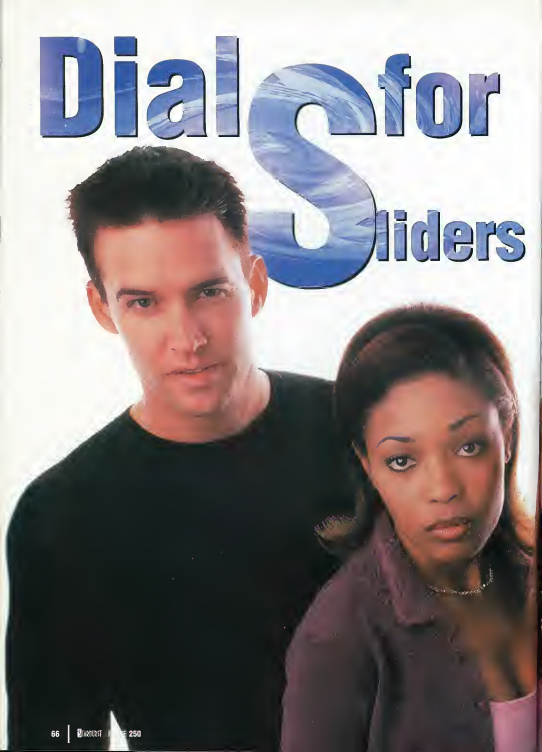
Gideon's secrets

In the first – perhaps only – season of *Crusade*, viewers will discover more about Gideon and his past. In *The Path of Sorrows*, for example, flashback scenes will revisit the destruction of the Cerberus, show how Gideon acquired the mysterious Apocalypse Box, and how his relationship with the Technomage Galen began. In another interesting development, the captain begins to develop a relationship with Babylon 5's commanding officer, Elizabeth Lochley, who he encounters during a conference on Mars in the Peter David-scripted *Ruling From the Tomb*. Needless to say, the best moments for Gideon are yet to come.

For Gary Cole, those are the moments worth waiting for. At the time of this interview, *Crusade's* future looked rosy; no one could have foreseen that the show would be pulled from production mid-run. "I think I work very instinctually," says Cole, offering a final thought, "and from what I can tell, most of the other actors that are working on this do too, so I'm sure we're going to learn from each other; how our personalities mesh and the characters will take shape, and I'm sure Joe will look at that and use it to his advantage. It takes some time to actually know how things are going to play out, on all levels."

"He has a dark side to him, certainly; he does hide things, and he lies when he has to"

Dial S for

A man with short dark hair and a woman with dark hair pulled back are looking directly at the camera with serious expressions. The man is wearing a black t-shirt, and the woman is wearing a dark purple top. The background is plain white.

Sliders

The *Sliders* are back – but there have been some changes. Executive producer Bill Dial shares his plans for Season Five with David Richardson

LONG-standing fans of *Sliders* will face something of a shock when the show returns for a new season in the summer. In the opening scenes of the first episode, two of the principal characters – Quinn Mallory (Jerry O'Connell) and Colin (Charlie O'Connell) – are lost in a freak accident within the sliding vortex...

For executive producer Bill Dial, the fifth year has been a time of change and discovery. Dial joined for Season Four, after the show had been cancelled by Fox and subsequently bought by

the Sci-Fi Channel. Freed of network interference, he and his colleagues were able to re-invent the series for a more discriminating audience. *Sliders* became edgier, more cerebral, and told some terrific, high concept stories.

Given the quality of the production during Season Four, it seemed almost inevitable that a further series would be commissioned. However, few fans had envisaged *Sliders* continuing without Jerry O'Connell, who had headlined the show from the very beginning... ►



The new *Sliders*: Mallory (Robert Floyd), Diana (Terri Locke)
Maggie (Karl Wehrer) and Rembrandt (Clement Denicks)



Kromaggs invading, Quinn and Colin vaporized, the Professor dead... It's no fun when you're a Slider!

"That Quinn Mallory was a genius; this character is a lab rat.... He's more 'street' than Jerry's character was"

► "Jerry had created that role, and he's a very important part of the show, not only as a leading man, but as a producer and director," Dial tells *Starburst* as we meet in his office at Universal Studios. "He directed four or five shows, and he was terrific. In addition to being a very talented guy, he's also one of the nicest and most grounded young men I've ever known."

"He just sold a big screenplay, so he has an unlimited future and I think he wants to go with that. We wish him the best – both he and Charlie are great guys."

Geiger counting

It's obvious there are no bad feelings concerning the O'Connells' decision to pursue their respective careers, and the *Sliders* production staff have chosen to use their departure as an opportunity rather than a burden. Enter a new recurring villain, Dr Geiger, played by *Babylon 5*'s Peter Jurasik, and a fresh story arc that will span the fifth season...

"We had this idea of a physicist trying for world domination on a quantum particle level," Dial offers. "But he's 'unstuck'. Basically he's been fiddling around with some quantum forcefield that has kind of unglued him from dimensions – he can't stick in one dimension.

He manages to put together a forcefield that contains him, but what he's trying to do is create a universe that he can live in."

Melded Mallory

As the season opens, Dr Geiger believes he has found a way to escape his prison within the vortex – by melding himself with an unwitting Slider. First he must test the process, and chooses a lab rat from a parallel dimension... Quinn's own double, Mallory. The results of this experiment are devastating: Colin is seemingly vaporized, and Quinn becomes the 'melded' version of two people, played by newcomer Robert Floyd.

Earlier in the day, we had met Floyd, and instantly noticed strong similarities between the young actor and Jerry O'Connell. Had this been a factor when the character was being cast?

"In a lot of ways he does," Dial concurs. "But [aspects of the old Quinn only appear] in the first couple of shows, and then the old Quinn goes away and it's explained. We didn't want to have Robert having to be Jerry, although in the beginning it was a pretty good idea."

"He's a good looking leading man type, and we are finding his comic abilities. That Quinn Mallory was a genius; this character is basically a lab rat, a gopher. He's a little more 'street' than Jerry's character was. He can hotwire cars and get out of meat lockers. There are all these little shady things that we learn about him as we go along."

The loss of Colin and the existence of the melded Mallory are a terrible blow for existing *Sliders* Rembrandt (Cleavant Dickerson, now the show's longest-serving cast member) and Maggie (Kari Wuhrer). They are

forced to seek help from Dr Geiger's assistant, quantum physicist Diana (Tembi Locke), who is unaware of her mentor's evil schemes. Shocked to discover the state of her friend Mallory, she decides to travel with the *Sliders*, and vows to find a way to un-meld them.

"Tembi has been remarkable," Dial enthuses. "Her audition was purposefully a tongue twister. It ended up not even being in the first script – it was just all of this techno gobbledegook. We figured that any actress who comes in here that can do this could do anything else we throw at her."

"She's a very intelligent, focused young woman. She's also being played as a kind of... not shrinking violet, but she's always pursued an intellectual career and not had a social life that Maggie has had. So we're introducing her a little bit to that."

The original Sliders

There have been many changes to *Sliders* since the show first began. Originally the show followed the brilliant young inventor Quinn, his mentor Professor Arturo (John Rhys Davis), Wade Wells (Sabrina Lloyd) and Rembrandt Brown, travelling between dimensions and attempting to return to their original Earth. Three years later, Arturo had been killed off and replaced by gutsy Marine Maggie Beckett. Wade disappeared between seasons, abducted by the Sliding aggressors known as Kromaggs. And 'our' Earth was conquered by the creatures, as Quinn discovered he was actually born in a parallel dimension, and that he has a brother...

Although Dial and his team have chosen to tone down the Kromagg storyline in Season Five, we are promised – at last – some resolution to the disappearance of Wade.



"As Groucho used to say, 'There won't be a dry seat in the house'," the executive producer promises of that story. "We invited Sabrina Lloyd to play the part, but she's in another show right now. She is coming in here on Friday, and she is going to do the voice of the character."

"Her character has been altered," adds Dial elusively, "we're just using Sabrina's voice..."

Maggie: due to meet her dad...

High five

Asked to choose some highlights from the forthcoming season, Dial thinks back over the 18 storylines that have been committed to film since shooting began in October.

"One of the things that is most fun for me with this particular series is that we can jump across genres very easily," he muses, "because we are going to different worlds. We have done crime stories, we have done romantic stories, this year we've done a war story, we did a musical with a choreographed dance number. We just finished a show that started off being like *To Catch a Thief*, with a jewel heist in a luxurious hotel where a film festival is going on and it ended up being more like a screwball comedy. So we can go from comedy to tragedy."

"We did a show this year in which Maggie's character confronts her father. Chris Black wrote it. In our mythology, Maggie's father was a Marine general who probably pushed her into the military."

"We can jump across genres very easily, because we are going to different worlds"

The Sliders head into new dimensions



► He was very distant, very cold, and this has been a problem that Maggie has been trying to work out.

"She lands on a world and her alternate father is there, who had a daughter called Maggie that he lost. The thing that Chris did, which was really nice, was that this father is able to resolve problems he had with his daughter with Maggie, who is not his daughter, and Maggie is able to resolve problems she had with her father with this guy. It was a very nice piece of tightrope writing – a very moving episode."

Checking in

A tour of the *Sliders* set also confirms that the Chandler Hotel – an establishment the travellers check into in most of the dimensions they visit – still plays a part in the series. Last year the Hotel was used as an obvious cost-saving exercise and a few stories (*The Alternateville Horror*, *Data World*) took place entirely within its confines. Dial reveals there were some lessons to be learned, but the idea of attempting 'bottle shows' has been revisited this season.

"*The Alternateville Horror* was a standard ghost story," he says. "It started off with the idea that we would save a little money, but that show ended up taking seven days to shoot – longer than we would normally take – because it was so complex."

"We just did a show in which the Chandler Hotel is an archaeological dig. Somehow it's 400 years off from our time, and it's layered over with sediment and our people get to be part of this dig. When they go and see it's the Chandler, they find a beer mug that the archaeologist decides is a sacrificial goblet, then they have a big debate over what a parking meter might have been: 'It sells time... but to what end?' It's really our take on how these funny archaeologists can find one pot and then invent an entire civilization!"

When *Starburst* visited the studio during March, only a few weeks worth of shooting remained. Yet again, the future of *Sliders* is undecided, but one might hope that, given the amazing developments of the past two years, it must be good for another season...

"I don't know what the plans are from the Sci-Fi Channel," Dial reveals. "They might not know what their plans are. Certainly I think the show should go on, whether I am involved in it or not, because it is successful and it's making money and it's got a wide-open premise. They can bring in all sorts of characters and go all kinds of places."

Splitting up

"The practicality is that everybody here is going to be unemployed in a couple of weeks, and the nature of the business is that people will go and take whatever they have to. I would like to be able to keep the company together... Last year the decision wasn't made for quite a while. We had all split up and gone to other places. It wasn't until August or sometime, and then it was a scuffle to try and get back the company together. One of the reasons we are able to do it for this money is the specific combination of people. I've been doing it a long time, and these are the best people I've ever worked with. I'm getting a little melancholy!"



Reunited:
veteran *Sliders*

Roads Taken

Of the many diverse and inventive stories from *Sliders*' fourth season, perhaps the most well-received was *Roads Taken*. Written by Bill Dial, it's a magical tale in which we peer into a 'bubble universe' where Quinn and Maggie have fallen in love, grown old together and have a son.

"We had been talking about the idea of following up on the obvious romantic interest between Quinn and Maggie," Dial recalls. "They had come close a number of times, clearly there was a physical interest there, but we never really pursued it."

"We thought, 'We can't really do it inside the series. We can't change the dynamic of the series.' The other thing was I was playing around with the idea of what would happen if a human being actually did what these people are doing... How long would it be before he was completely psychotic? They have no control over where they are going, they are constantly being chased by Kromaggs and bad guys and dinosaurs and crazy people... I think you'd come apart fairly soon. You certainly wouldn't make it through 40 episodes!"

"So the idea came, 'What if in one of these slides some kind of bubble universe was created almost literally out of their own anxiety. From a longing for a normal life.' Because they can't have it, some Space/Time [anomaly] creates this little bubble universe where they do exist as normal people – they go to school, they date, they have a kid and grow old, all in a space of hours."

Sweet, touching and ultimately tragic (Quinn and Maggie's son sacrifices himself to release them from the bubble universe), *Roads Taken* brought a tear to the eye of many viewers.

"Jerry directed it," says a satisfied Dial, "and he did a beautiful job."



"I think the show should go on, whether I am involved in it or not, because it is successful"

Worst of Times



The Outer Limits turns 100 with a haunting Time travel tale about the Holocaust. By Simon Bacal

EXECUTIVE producer Richard B Lewis claims, "When it comes to The Outer Limits, we're dealing with strong and provocative stories. But we're very rarely moved to tears."

For Lewis, however, *Tribunal*, The Outer Limits' one hundredth episode, currently scheduled to air in mid-May, is a very definite exception.

"The reason is quite simple," Lewis explains. "The father of Sam Egan, the episode's writer, was in a concentration camp. His daughter and first wife were both brutally murdered in the camp. Later, Sam's father married another survivor. With this episode, Sam wrote an emotional and heart wrenching story about his father and the sister he never knew."

"I used my father's story as a reference point for the episode," says Egan, "so it wasn't too hard to acquire research material since my father had told me the stories for years. I incorporated many of them into the structure of this story—especially when it came to the cruelty and atrocities of the death camps."

Directed by Mario Azzopardi, *Tribunal* begins in 1944 when Leon Zgierski (Roman Danylo), an inmate in Birkenau concentration

camp, watches helplessly as First Lieutenant Karl Rademacher (Alex Zahara) shoots Zgierski's wife and sends the inmate's daughter to the gas chamber. Witnessing the hellish murder is Nicholas Prentice (Alex Daikun), a Time traveller, who grabs the officer's SS jacket, pulls out an antique watch and vanishes into an orange glowing circle.

Back to the present

Cut to the present, and Leon is an old man (Peter Boretski) while Aaron (Saul Rubinek), Leon's son by his second marriage, believes that the war criminal is now living in Philadelphia under the alias of Robert Greene (Jan Rubes)—but he can't convince his ex-wife, US Attorney Gwen Sawyer (Lindsay Crouse) to file charges against the old man. The Time traveller offers Aaron the jacket, enough evidence to convict the old man, but Aaron breaks into the traveller's bedroom, steals the antique watch and journeys back to Birkenau and meets his father. Masquerading as an SS officer, Prentice rescues Aaron from the past and explains that he represents the Tribunal, an organization from the Future, which seeks justice to those who have violated and abused human rights.

"My father was delighted when he learned that I was doing this episode," Egan says. "Many survivors don't want to talk about their experiences, so they immerse themselves in the past and surround themselves with a wall of

silence. But my father, who is poet and writer, has found a catharsis in remembering, so, for him, it was especially meaningful to have a story which reflected his own history."

Meanwhile, Saul Rubinek is no stranger to the subject matter since his parents are Holocaust survivors.

"About 10 years ago, I made *So Many Miracles*, a documentary which explored my parents' return to Poland and their reunification with the farmers who had hidden them from the Nazis for more than two years during the war. I also wrote a book about the experience—so I did not really need a lot of research time for this particular role."



Aaron (Saul Rubinek) goes back in Time...

"The father of Sam Egan, the writer, was in a concentration camp. His daughter and first wife were both murdered"



"Many survivors don't want to talk about their experiences," says writer Sam Egan



Chilling images of the past



Recreating Auschwitz
in Vancouver

► "On many occasions Sam's father was on set, something which definitely lent an authenticity to the whole experience," Rubbing adds. "Here was a man who had experienced Auschwitz first hand. Sam had been dealing with the subject matter throughout his entire life, so this Science Fiction series enabled him to marry that experience with the episode in a realistic and compelling manner."

Rubinek was especially drawn to his character. "Quite honestly, this guy is more driven and obsessed with his father's past – something of a familiar pattern when parents have experienced severe trauma. The children usually have great difficulty separating their lives from their parents' tragedies. In this case, the character has been obsessed with his father's trauma, so he's trying to convince people that this guy killed his stepmother and sister, but not too many people care anymore."

Meanwhile, those scenes set during the Holocaust required *The Outer Limits*' crew to create an authentic and believable vision of a Nazi death camp. The camp was constructed near Vancouver, the shooting ground for *The Outer Limits*.

"Steve Geaghan, our production designer, and Stephanie Nolin, our costumer, made sure that the concentration camp's prisoners were authentically clothed," Egan says. "Additionally, I drew upon my father's memories of the camps and photo documentation and a large number of reference books. We recreated the camp's exterior on a chicken ranch at a farmland outside Vancouver – something which required us to place barbed wire around these enormous hen house-like structures and erect the enormous gates of Auschwitz."

Inside Auschwitz

"When it came to the interior, we absolutely recreated the Auschwitz barracks – right down to the German slogans which were printed on the beams above the bunks. In Vancouver, we found a huge number of Russian immigrants with European faces – so the whole project was a labour of love on the part of some very talented and creative people."

Combining the Holocaust with the world of Science Fiction was no easy task – according to Egan. "Thanks to *The Outer Limits*, I've learned that good Science Fiction is all about character driven and identifiable

human stories," he says. "So when we start with the type of emotional underpinnings that materialize via wartime experiences and the legacy of concentration camps, so many components are in place that the Science Fiction, in many respects, comes forth fairly easily."

"In the case of this show 20th Century Time travel had been perfected, and these war tribunals were established to deal with criminals throughout Time. I don't want to give too much away, but there we established an elaborate rationale behind these Time travellers behaviour during their travels back through-out Time. Their actions have to be approved by their elders so that a change in the past would not be so detrimental to the future that a chain reaction would occur from a seemingly innocuous intervention."

Egan is especially proud of a sequence in which the elder Rademacher is transported back to Birkenau to confront his younger self. "The young Nazi actually murders himself as an old man," he says. "And I loved writing that because it simply resonates with strong drama, a sense of poetic justice and head-spinning suspense."

"The whole project was a labour of love on the part of some very talented and creative people"

COMPETITION BONANZA!

Star Trek

CIC Video release the next two new volumes of *Deep Space Nine* (featuring *Chrysalis*, *Treachery*, *Faith* and *The Great River*, *Once More Unto the Breach* and *The Siege of AR-558*) and *Voyager* (including *Once Upon a Time*, *Timeless*, *Infinite Regress* and *Nothing Human*) in May alongside the latest re-issues of

The *Next Generation*'s second season.

However, if you win our competition, you can have the first *Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine* releases of the month (Volumes 5.3 and 7.3 respectively) absolutely gratis and for no money. Just answer this ludicrously easy poser:

Q: Which well-known *Next Generation* character pops up in *Voyager's* *Timeless*?

- a: Geordi La Forge
- b: Beverly Crusher
- c: Spot the Cat



If you think you know, call and leave your answer on:

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eXistenZ

After his controversial last movie, *Crash*, David Cronenberg is back with a bang with new release *eXistenZ*, starring Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jude Law.

The film had its World Premiere at the recent Berlin Festival where David Cronenberg received the Silver Bear award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement.

To win one of 10 packages of CD soundtracks, posters, a novelization of the film, stickers and t-shirts, answer the following dead easy question:

Q: Which famous David Cronenberg movie featured Jeff Goldblum?

- a: Videodrome
- b: The Fly
- c: Naked Lunch



If you think you know, call and leave your answer on:

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Sphere

The underwater Sci-Fi thriller *Sphere* stars Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone and Samuel L. Jackson as a team of hand-picked experts who go deep down to examine an alien spacecraft. On board they find a large golden sphere, and when one of the team enters it, the crew's worst fears come to life, and a strange presence begins to talk to them through the computer system.

You can get your hands on one of 10 copies of this Michael Crichton adaptation, which will also come to you with the original book snugly tucked away in the same package courtesy of Warner Home Video.

To win, answer this deceptively complex question:

Q: In which Sci-Fi film did Sharon Stone star opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger?

- a: The Terminator
- b: Predator
- c: Total Recall



If you think you know, call and leave your answer on:

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The Crow

The Crow: Stairway to Heaven is the spin-off from the hit movie as Eric Draven and his girlfriend Shelly are killed causing Draven to be reborn as a vengeance-seeking spirit. The series runs in the UK on Sci-Fi from 4th June at 8.30pm with a repeat on Sundays at midnight. To mark the occasion, Sci-Fi are offering *Sterburst* readers 10 videos of the original movie *The Crow* plus assorted Sci-Fi merchandise. In addition, the first prize will also include a copy of the hard-back book *The Crow: Shattered Lives and Broken Dreams* as well as an autographed picture of Mark Dacascos, who plays Eric Draven in the series.



To be in with a chance of winning one of these prizes all you have to do is answer the question below:

Q: How is Eric Draven killed in the first episode of *The Crow: Stairway to Heaven*?

- a: He is hit in the face with a particularly heavy bludge
- b: He is mown down by a 10-ton truck
- c: He is thrown from a 18th floor window

If you think you know, call and leave your answer on:

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Ring Leader



He's directed such Fantasy favourites as *Heavenly Creatures* and *The Frighteners*, now Peter Jackson begins work on *Lord of the Rings*. By Helen Barlow



GEORGE LUCAS might have *Star Wars*, and he might even be shooting *Episode Two* of his prequels in Sydney, but there is another mega-production taking form on the other side of the globe. Peter Jackson, the George Lucas of Christchurch, is about to tackle *The Lord of the Rings*. He has already spent two years devising the three films, and it hasn't been without his hiccups.

At first Miramax Films were going to fund the JRR Tolkien trilogy as two movies, and it would have been the company's most expensive effort ever. But Miramax, who so much love stars like Paltrow and Benigni at the centre of their movies, balked, and good-manneredly gave Jackson a month to come up with another company. The more risk-taking American company, New Line, of *Boogie Nights* and *The Wedding Singer* fame, decided that they would make the films instead – it would also be their most costly undertaking ever – and they would be happy with three movies and no stars. It was a great relief to Jackson, that the original books (and not what he calls “some strange hybrid version”) could be filmed, and that Hollywood would be of little consequence, since as usual, he would make the films in Christchurch. And what Hollywood star wants to spend 18 months there?

Down under

“I feel quite safe and sort of isolated in New Zealand,” says Jackson. “I guess I feel that I’m out of that [Hollywood] system that I don’t particularly like. So it’s a good place to be.”

Jackson, who was born on Halloween in 1961, had been lauded internationally for his films, *Heavenly Creatures*, *The Frighteners* and his splat-stick movies, (a genre he invented) *Bad Taste* and *Braindead*. He had been hankering to do a bigger movie, and when the long-awaited remake of his favourite film, *King Kong*, fell through – under the weight of *Godzilla* and *Mighty Joe Young*, *The Lord of the Rings* seemed the obvious choice.

“I mean, *The Lord of the Rings* is big, but it’s such a wonderful property that it’s worth spending five years of your life to do,” says Jackson, talking at the International Festival of Fantasy Films in Brussels. “If it was anything other than *Lord*

of the *Rings*, I probably wouldn’t do it, but it is such an amazing story and an amazing book that it’s an honour and a privilege really. But I wasn’t one of those total *Lord of the Rings* aficionados. I read it when I was 18 and I didn’t read it again until the whole idea of doing the film came up, 17 years later.

“I was thinking about what to do after *The Frighteners* and I was really thinking about what is possible with computers and technology now, what amazing new places and creatures you can create. I realized this could be the ideal time to finally make *Lord of the Rings*, because for 40 years it hasn’t been made as a live action movie. I know there’ve been various film-makers that at times have tried to do it, some scripts have been written, but it’s always been one of those unfilmable stories. [In 1978 an animated film of the first two books of *The Lord of the Rings* was directed by Ralph Bakshi.] I thought probably the time of it being unfilmable has come to an end with the advances in computer technology.”

Hobbits go CGI

Jackson is one of the few movie directors who truly understands the technology as well as the creative process of movie-making (think Cameron, Lucas and Spielberg here) and he can produce the costly special effects relatively cheaply tucked away in New Zealand, but with the help of computer experts from around the globe. “I’m absolutely hopeless on computers,” he laughs. “I understand what they do, which is important, I understand how they do it, but I can’t actually type in the instructions myself.”

In the three *Lord of the Rings* films there will be around 65 speaking parts, and while ▶



Peter Jackson gets to grips with *The Lord of the Rings*

These *Heavenly Creatures*

"There are all sort of creatures and monsters that will be created on the computer, but Gollum's different"

▶ prosthetics and other special effects will be used, the only fully computerized character will be Gollum. "He's the little emaciated guy who's been kind of poisoned by the ring over 500 years," Jackson explains. "He is actually a key character in the second and third films, but he doesn't do much in the first. There are all sort of creatures and monsters that will be created on the computer, but Gollum's different because he says dialogue and has to have an emotional connection in the story. He's very much a real character."

Ring collaborators

Jackson's screenplays for *Lord of the Rings* have taken form at his Christchurch home, where he has recruited his usual collaborator, his partner, Fran Walsh, as well as two local writers, Stephen Sinclair and Philippa Boyens. "The *Lord of the Rings* is such a complicated project, it's so huge, with three difficult scripts, so we actually needed some help on it. We'd worked with Stephen before and Philippa's a great *Lord of the Rings* pool of knowledge. She's read the book umpteen times and she's a very good writer. So we have the group of us now doing it together."

"Fran and I have an office in our house where we work, but we have to have hours of the day when we work and then we have hours when we can be parents. [Their infant son made a quick appearance in *The Frighteners*, and they now have a daughter too.] We just make sure that one doesn't get in the way of the other."

For those experiencing memory loss, *The Hobbit* actually preceded *The Lord of the Rings* in the Tolkien saga, and told the wondrous tale of the unassuming Bilbo Baggins, who discovers a mysterious ring. *The Lord of the Rings* begins with *The Fellowship of the Ring* (which is followed by *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*) and follows Frodo Baggins, nephew of Bilbo, as he discovers that the ring left to him by his uncle is very powerful, particularly for the evil Lord Sauron. So together with his friends Sam Gamgee, Merry Brandybuck and Pippin Took, he undertakes an adventure to try to destroy it.

More than 50 million copies of *The Lord of the Rings* have been sold in 25 languages since the books were first published in paperback form in the 1960s. Tolkien, an English Professor at Oxford University, created the series out of his lifelong interest in languages, myths and legends. His world is like a utopian peace-loving Europe, filled with wizards, elves, dwarves, dragons, and goblins, and more fanciful characters, like hobbits, orcs, balrogs, woses and ents.

Jackson somehow resembles a hobbit or a mild-mannered Tolkien-esque character, and concedes, with a laugh, that there will be a cameo part for himself in the movies. But most of the players will be unknown, though the exact casting has yet to be decided.

Connery casting?

Jackson denies reports that Sean Connery will be in the film. "That's just stuff that's on the Net. I mean, Sean would be fine, I'd love to work with him one day, he's one of those icons. But he's never been approached and I suspect it's not going to happen in this movie. I can't quite imagine Sean Connery coming down to New Zealand for 18 months. Whoever will be in all three of these movies, will basically be spending most of 18 months in New Zealand. So it's much better to work with unknown actors, who are happy just to do the work."

Everything, of course, had worked out well with Michael J. Fox on *The Frighteners*, even if the American actor was homesick during his seven-month Christchurch stint. "His schedule was adjusted so he could fly back regularly to the US for five days at a time," explains Jackson. "He missed his family, but he didn't make a big fuss about it."

The much postponed *Lord of the Rings* shooting date is now September, and Jackson promises it is set in stone. Mostly New Zealand locations will be used, and now that Europe is too over-populated and polluted to be that pristine, what better place to recreate Tolkien's vision than amongst the majestic New Zealand valleys and mountains. The castles and fortresses of the story will of course be computer-generated, as well as some of the environments, like a huge waterfall, and the skies will be enhanced and be made to move faster.

But what of Jackson's smaller genre films? Has he left the likes of *Braindead* and *Bad Taste* behind? He admits he could have already made a regular film in the time he has spent writing so many versions of the *Lord of the Rings* screenplay.



Michael J. Fox may reprise some psychic turbulence in *The Frighteners*

"I have a lot of things I'd like to do, and you're always terrified that you're going to run out of time and just not get them done. But I'd love to do *Bad Taste 2* one day, I'd love to even do *Braindead 2*. Those films were a lot of fun. It's just a really cheeky thing to do, having the whole audience going, 'Oh my God! Yuki! It's horrible!' I sit there and it feels good. Ha ha! It's like a naughty schoolboy thing, it's like jumping out of the bushes with a mask to scare a bunch of girls as they walk past. It's that juvenile kind of humour and I love it; I have never lost that humour or wanted it to go away. To date, no one has put a splatter movie together with computer effects, because you could out-splatter anybody else now. So one day I'd love to make a *Bad Taste 2* or some other splatter movie, but using computer effects. It could be quite outrageous."

After The Rings

"Certainly whatever happens with *Lord of the Rings*, and no matter how successful or unsuccessful it is, I'm definitely going to make some smaller films next, because I'm making a big movie now, I'm making the biggest film that I ever want to make. I don't need to make anything bigger than *Lord of the Rings*, but it's a great experience."

Of course, King Kong is there waiting one day too. "Yes, I really like the King Kong screenplay that we wrote, and I would definitely like to make it. So maybe that will happen after *Lord of the Rings*," he pauses for a moment, realizing that he is contradicting himself, and that the future is never certain in the film business. "Though it's not exactly the small movie I want to make next."

"Whoever will be in these movies will basically be spending most of 18 months in New Zealand"

Reviews



Keanu Reeves in *The Matrix*



Survival in
Razorback



Guy Pearce in *Ravenous*

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are the latest offerings on the shelf

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Gary Kurtz, Stanley Kubrick, *Hannibal Lecter*,
Bond and James Herbert on *The Big Breakfast*
— yeah, we know, it's only a television programme!

98

The Matrix x

Cast

Keanu Reeves
Laurence Fishburne
Carrie-Anne Moss
Hugo Weaving
Gloria Foster
Joe Pantoliano
Marcus Chong
Paul Goddard
Robert Taylor
Julian Arahanga
Matt Doran
Belinda McClory
Anthony Ray Parker

Production

Producer Joel Silver
Executive Producers
..... Barrie Osborne
..... Andrew Mason
..... Andy Wachowski
..... Larry Wachowski
..... Erwin Stoff
..... & Bruce Berman
Co-producer Crachiolo
Directors & writers
..... the Wachowski Brothers
Music Don Davis
Visual effects supervisor
..... John Gaeta
Kung fu choreographer & wire
specialist Yuen Wo Ping
Special make-up effects
..... Bob McCarron
Animatronic prosthetics
make-up effects... Group Studio

136 mins
Cert R/15

Release

America April
Britain June

Starburst Rating

10+++

IT'S THAT Truman Show time of year again. You know, where I heap endless superlatives on one particular movie and predict you won't see anything anywhere near as good all year. And non-withstanding the imminent releases of *The Phantom Menace* and *Austin Powers 2*, I think I'm on pretty safe ground in saying *The Matrix* is going to figure very high indeed on every one of your Top 10 lists.

Eye-popping, gob-smacking and stunning are overused words these days in the critic's lexicon of hype, but there is no other way to describe the Wachowski brothers truly amazing entry into the Science Fiction field with a super-smart action adventure across two dimensions which combines a frighteningly paranoid scenario, astonishingly acrobatic kung fu, tremendously original special effects and ultra-cool visuals for a new level of roller-coaster excitement.

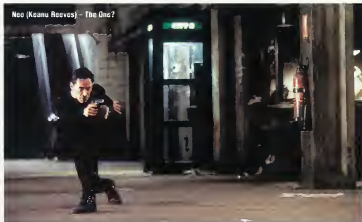
What if the world you think is 'real' is in reality being fed into your brain by a master computer? Well, that's *The Matrix*, a Big Brother super-highway that keeps the future population passive by plugging them at birth into a virtual reality universe resembling the late 20th. Century. You see, just after the millennium, Mankind fought a war with Machines and lost, leaving Earth an environmentally ravaged hellhole.

But the victorious Artificial Intelligence need the crushed life-blood of humanity to fuel their omnipotence and to keep everybody happy in their energy-gathering, lab-controlled pod environments feed them comfort images of 'normality'. Keanu Reeves plays a 22nd century

computer hacker with the underground handle Neo who reluctantly joins a band of freedom fighters when their leader Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) recognizes him as the possible Chosen One to shake his sleeping world out of its human battery-pack complacency and battle the evils of cyberspace slavery.

While that's actually more information than you really need to know about the story, in many ways it's still not enough to convey how magnificently different *The Matrix* is to anything else you've ever seen. Nor does it give a real indication of its thematic complexity which skillfully integrates Christian motifs, Eastern philosophy, Lewis Carroll, ancient mysticism, Jackie Chan, Japanese anime and Windows 2001 seamlessly together. Even more astounding is the fact that the Wachowski's effortlessly juggle all these densely packed intricate elements into a streamlined and totally united whole.

Perfectly cast as the ever-questioning saviour of mankind, Keanu Reeves reclaims his action hero crown after his splashy *Speed* inauguration and makes a mean malleable foil to Laurence Fishburne's commanding performance as his mentor. Hugo Weaving also has great fun as Agent Smith, the controlling face of the AI world, who, with other sinister men in black sunglasses, can morph anywhere on Earth through fake humanoid spies called Sentinels. His deliberately monotonous speech delivery is a neat touch in a power-driven extravaganza brimming over with them. Elsewhere, Carrie-Anne Moss as Trinity, one of Morpheus' band of techno warriors who travels through the oceanic



Ravenous



'Entertaining as hell!'

Cast

Guy Pearce
Robert Carlyle
Jeremy Davies
Jeffrey Jones
John Spencer
Stephen Spinella
Neal McDonough
David Arquette
Joseph Running

Production

Producers Adam Fields
..... David Heyman
Executive producer
..... Tim Van Reim
Director Antonia Bird
Screenplay Ted Griffin
Music Michael Nyman
..... Damon Albarn

100 mins.
Cert R/18

Released

America March
Britain July

Starburst rating

9

'The terrifying
twosome's cat- and -
mouse finale will also
leave you limp from
laughing and
screaming'

TWENTY years after the Italian exploitation industry served up one indigestible and contemptible cannibal holocaust after another, the volatile subject matter now enters the mainstream with Fox's prestigious black comedy Horror stew. Quite the strangest movie to come down the pike in a long while, *Ravenous* will bewitch some, bother others and bewilder most people as they strain to get a handle on what exactly the *Face/Priest* director is up to.

Cannibalism would hardly seem to be a topic to take lightly, yet that's precisely what the film-makers here continually do as graphic gut-spilling gore jostles with *Carry On* style banter from a brilliant ensemble cast. Hook on to the touchy tone of Bird's art-house Horror and you'll be rewarded with a thought-provoking and highly disturbing rendition of the Wendigo Indian legend. Resist her mock shock modus operandi and *Ravenous* will leave you as cold as the climate in the Sierra Nevada mountains where the story, loosely based on the infamous Donner Pass Disaster of 1847, is set.

In the same year, Captain John Boyd (Guy Pearce) is assigned to a remote army outpost in that unforgiving terrain after his supposed heroism in the Mexican War is discovered to have been based on absolute cowardice. At these barracks, he shamefacedly takes his place amongst a motley assortment of other outcasts: amiable commanding officer Hart (Jeffrey Jones), nervous priest Toffler (Jeremy Davies), drunken doctor Knox (Stephen Spinella), permanent peyote-smoking cook Cleaves (David Arquette) and macho tyrant Reich (Neal McDonough).

Then a mysterious stranger staggers into the fort. The starving and frost-bitten Colqhoun (Robert Carlyle) tells a horrendous story about how he was leading a group of settlers through the

mountains when a storm trapped them in a cave. After months of starvation hardship, some of the band became cannibals to survive, but he escaped to get help and hopefully save the remaining victims from ending up on their menu. Naturally, Hart springs into action and urgently takes his men into the mountains to investigate. But it's a trap laid by the flesh-hungry Colqhoun himself to get extra human provisions... and that's where writer Ted Griffin's startling steel-trap saga, containing as many surprise twists and turns as *Scream*, truly begins.

What makes *Ravenous* so riveting is the way Griffin allies the act of cannibalism to an irresistible addiction. Once you've tasted human flesh, he says, you're hooked, and the slightest sniff of blood can cause the urge to become overpowering. Hence Colqhoun licking Toffler's stomach wound as the priest lies sleeping in one of the more outrageous moments to grace Bird's unique fable. Colqhoun wants more people to share his blood-thirsty obsession if he's to survive and thrive and this plot strand cleverly conjures up the whole vampire ethos too.

But it's the Wendigo myth brought into full metaphorical force which evocatively posits the notion that by eating the flesh of a man, you gain his strength and spirit. One of the major jolts revolves around this theory and reveals how much more cerebrally orientated and smart *Ravenous* is compared to all the other softer genre options around at the moment. The old hippie mantra 'You are what you eat' takes on a whole new macabre meaning here.

Robert Carlyle is wonderful as Colqhoun and etches the strongest cinematic portrait of pure evil since Anthony Hopkins in *The Silence of the Lambs*. Matching him every step of the way is Guy Pearce who takes Boyd on the most enormous character arc and reveals his staggering acting range in the process. Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, LA Confidential and now this — Pearce is absolutely amazing and eventual Oscar glory is surely not too far off. He also has one of the best stunt sequences you'll witness outside of a Bond adventure and that's just another surprise in an off-kilter chiller-diller chock full of them. The terrifying twosome's cat-and-mouse finale will also leave you limp from laughing and screaming.

My favourite moment in *Ravenous* belongs to Carlyle. As winter turns to spring and he spies a small group of people in the distance heading towards the military compound, he smiles and utters, 'Breakfast, lunch and reinforcements'. This one you have just got to see because it's original, funny, ultra-gory, provocative, imaginatively scored (by Michael Nyman and Damon Albarn) and as entertaining as hell. Bon appetit!

Alan Jones



'Original and ultra-gory'

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DSN: Waitt



DSN: Honor Among Thieves

THE other day I was speaking with Ira Steven Behr—yeah, yeah, call me a name-dropper—about the impending end of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. During the course of the conversation I mentioned that I consider DSN the best of the *Trek* shows. Behr seemed surprised. But it's true; and I wasn't kissing butt. While I grew up on the original series and in many ways still consider it my sentimental favorite, only the first season and a few episodes in the second and third years were truly top-notch. DSN, for the better part of its seven-year run, was consistently solid, often brilliant.

I could easily name a dozen episodes—*Duet*, *Far Beyond the Stars*, *The Wire*, *The Way of the Warrior* two-parter, *Honor Among Thieves*, *Our Man Bashir*, *Hard Time*, *Waitt*, *His Way and The Siege of AR-558*, OK, so make that 11—and would happily sit and watch any of them again, which I may have to do now that DSN is history. DSN took risks from day one, when it put an African-American in the lead role (though it was a mistake to wait so long to promote Avery Brooks' Sisko to Captain). The dark tone and the lack of a ship boldly going somewhere (until the *Defiant* emerged) were dangerous moves.

Then there was the Dominion war, a multi-layered, violent arc, with consequences for every action. It was also problematic. The fight went on and on, but wars often do. Casual viewing became impossible. And even avid viewers found it tough to deal with a war hour one week and fluff—not particularly good fluff, especially by comparison—like *Take Me Out to the Holosuite* the next week. But the battle royal represented something unique and not for a second lackadaisical TV in a small screen landscape littered with paint-by-numbers crap.

On-screen chemistry

Typical of DSN at its best has been the rather hectic crop of recent episodes. After the escapist, deliciously absurd fun of *Badda-Bing Badda-Bang*, in which the crew tried to help Vic Fontaine (James Darren) within his holographic world, DSN went in for the kill, launching an uninterrupted arc leading to the two-hour finale. In *Penumbra*, we got Worf (Michael Dorn) and Ezri (Nicole deBoer) giving into their passion, if only momentarily. We witnessed the wily Dukat (Marc Alaimo) transform himself into a Bajoran. In *Eclipse*, the Dominion and Breen stand ready to vanquish the Federation, while Kai Winn (Louise Fletcher) and Dukat refuse to let Sisko stand in the way of their plans for Bajor.

And there's tons more in *Eclipse*: Worf kills Weyoun (Jeffrey Combs), or at least a Weyoun; a disenchanted Damar (Casey Biggs) becomes an

unexpected Federation comrade; while Ezri and Bashir (Alexander Siddig) come to separate realizations that they like each other. Is there too much going on? Sure. Does it feel rushed? Yes. Will storylines be overlooked. No doubt about it. But war is hell. And the acting has been superb. Dorn and deBoer share great chemistry. Alaimo has the enigmatic bit down pat. Combs oozes contempt and there's nothing more powerful than a close-up of Fletcher's stern face.

Personally, I can't wait for the finale, *What You Leave Behind*. Yet, I don't really want to see it, for it heralds the end of DSN.

Mulder Magic

The *X-Files* is on a tear of rip-roaring shows, among them the Rob Bowman-directed outing, *Trevor*. In it, one Pinker Rawls (John Diehl), inmate at a Mississippi prison, lands himself in *The Box*, sort of an outdoor, latrine-like solitary confinement space. With a twister approaching, it's not where anyone wants to be. By the time the tornado moves on, *The Box* is gone and the prison's superintendent is dead, mysteriously burned in hail. Enter Mulder and Scully, who try to piece together the puzzle. Meanwhile, Pinker is very much alive, stealing clothes, killing an old friend and letting the world know "I want what's mine." Could it be his ex-girlfriend, June (Catherine Dent)? Might it be the \$90,000 he once stole? Or could it be the son, Trevor (Jeffrey Schoeny), he never met and only heard about in the slammer?

Trevor sizzles for several reasons. One, the science is nifty. Pinker walks through walls because he's pure electrical energy, but glass and rubber, Mulder theorizes, might be his Achilles' heels. Two, there's a single story with no distracting subplots. Three, the characters speak like normal people. Four, the ending comes unexpectedly and with an emotional payoff. *Trevor* might remind some people of the *Horror Flick Shocker*, which starred *The X-Files'* own Mitch Pileggi as supercharged killer Horace Pinker. Hmm. Inspiration? Inside joke? Only *Trevor* scripters Jim Guttridge and Ken Hawrylyk know for sure.

Fabulous Frakes

Jonathan Frakes meant business during his *Insurrection* rounds when he said he planned to act, produce and direct projects for film and TV. He's got a couple of features on the front burner. *Roswell High*, a TV series developed by his production company, Goepf Circle, seems destined for inclusion on the fall schedule of one of the major networks. And then there's the recent UPN TV movie, *Dying to Live*, which Frakes produced and acted in. Picture in your mind *Ghost* for teens and you've got *Dying to Live*. Pretty and perky Rachel





USA: Far Beyond the Stars

(Hayley DuMond) and diving hunk Matthew (Gabriel Mann) are high schoolers in love, but tragedy strikes when Rachel dies in an accident for which Matthew is blamed. Of course, Matthew committed no crime; jealous Vanessa (Shannon Elizabeth) did. But how to prove it? Voila: Rachel's ghost, with an assist from guardian angel Frakes, clues Matthew in.

Dying to Live is a bit like a puppy: cute, endearing, scruffy and liable to make you sneeze. It's not for everybody, with Mann going the Mr Sympathetic route and Frakes shamelessly hamming it up as he delivers — thank God — zippy punchlines that pierce the more solemn scenes. DuMond is a find; she's earnest and believable. Elizabeth, however, misses the mark as the villainess. So stident she makes *Buffy's* Chansma Carpenter seem downright folksy and subtle, Elizabeth sticks out like a sore thumb. There's talk that *Dying to Live* could evolve into a series, but don't hold your breath. Chances are the ghosts of back-door pilots past will regard *Dying to Live* as a nice diversion, a mildly entertaining enterprise, and leave it at that.

Vamping it up

Lastly, there's *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. The most recent episode, which preceded a string of repeats, was *Enemies*, an important, if ultimately underwhelming hour. *Enemies* put the spotlight on Faith (Eliza Dushku), our Second Slayer, who's turning to the dark side faster than you can say Darth Vader. In cahoots with the increasingly sinister Mayor (Harry Groener), Faith tries to seduce Angel (David Boreanaz), figuring Angel can help bring about Buffy's demise. When that fails, the Mayor hauls out a more powerful mischief-maker.

Despite a couple of neat twists, *Enemies* never takes off. The dialogue feels forced and hollow; really, what the hell did poor Buffy do to unleash Faith's wrath? The pacing is off, too. Scenes that would benefit from a leisurely pace zip by, and those best kept taut run on. Fortunately, Groener is a hoot, Dushku delivers the proper intensity and Boreanaz continues to underplay Angel just perfectly. As for Miss Gellar, she kicks ass, as usual.

Ian Spelling



The X-Files ... on a tear of rip-roaring shows

This Month's Authors

Jon Courtenay Grimwood was born in Malta and grew up in the Far East, Britain and Scandinavia. He currently lives and works in London and reMix is his third novel, following *NeoAddix* and *Lucifer's Dragon*.

Matthew Thomas is 29 years old and lives in Bracknell. He works as a flight simulator graphic designer and *Before & After* is his first novel.

Sara Douglass was born in South Australia and spent her early working life as a nurse. She currently teaches medieval history at La Trobe University, Bendigo.

There is no biographical information about the *James Spackard* in *The High House*, so he remains a mystery character...

Stephen Baxter is the critically acclaimed and award-winning author of *The Time Ships*, *Titan* and *Moonseed*. He was born in 1957, raised in Liverpool and has a degree in Mathematics from Cambridge and a PhD from Southampton.



Remix

by Jon Courtenay Grimwood

Published by Earthlight

360pp £6.99 p/b

"Ben's my friend"... "But he's dead, so I'm looking after him". That's how ratboy-mutant/scavenger called Lars reveals to Elizabeth Alexandra Fabio, the young rich bitch he has rescued from kidnappers, why he's carrying around a frozen head in a cryogenic-bucket. From the lowlife seedy fringes of rundown colonies on the Moon, where virtually senile computers are seemingly captivated by Soap Operas, to the last days of besieged Imperial France, where a steel-eating virus has brought the wholly technology-dependent European nations to a stone-age standstill, the alternative-world background of Jon Courtenay Grimwood's new novel, *reMix*, explores what happens when vastly different cultural and social levels collide.

While the would-be Napoleonic Emperor of France vows to resist a ragtag army of German troops that has surrounded his capital city, political figurehead Lady Clare Fabio sends the infamous cyborg and one-time musical spindoctor Flox Valmont to LunaWorld to locate her missing daughter. Sporadic, yet highly charged, acts of violence are hammered out with chillingly forensic detail to the point of overkill. *reMix* delivers its off-the-scale graphic set pieces like using dynamite to defrost a fridge. As a genre author, the somewhat precocious Grimwood stands proudly upon the shoulders of giants to wave his tatty and blood-stained cyberpunk flag. Familiar SF concepts like O'Neill space colonies, and Bob Shaw's exotic notion of SlowGlass, are scandalously filched without formal acknowledgement and hotwired into the inconsequential narrative. Like most characters that are created by young SF writers, the players in Grimwood's psychodrama exhibit more attitude than intelligence, making this the sort of imaginary future only like-minded cyber-junkies could truly enjoy.

Starburst rating

Before & After

by Matthew Thomas

Published by Voyager

425pp £5.99 p/b

Nostradamus is alive and well and posing as a university professor named Michael D Nostrus, a historian whose formidable reputation precedes him 'the way ball lightning precedes earthquakes'. Mike's 'once-lost powers of prediction have returned in the final months of 1999, just in time for the 500 year old former prophet to win a fortune by correctly forecasting unlikely and bizarre events.



Sensing that doomsday is approaching, Nostrus retreats to a Welsh farmhouse with his telepathic cat Aristotle, and his smartest student Deborah, to ride out the impending apocalypse. But our heroes' survival plan fails on Halloween night, as Satan launches a pre-emptive strike against the forces of good to start Armageddon early.

I look forward to first novels because the discovery of a new talent may be as thrilling as reading SF itself. In this case, however, the hoped for diamond sparking in the rough has turned out to be just a trick of the light. Although a great deal of pre-millennial anxiety informs this comedy of terrors, Matthew Thomas conjures up a flimsy plot, and characters of little substance. Thomas chooses only soft targets for his satire: a blustering TV-evangelist, two incompetent demons from Hell, stupid revolutionary anarchists, a nosy reporter abducted by aliens, etc. This book takes self-indulgent digression to the extremes of wholly surreal stand-up TV comedy routines, as the story is almost forgotten for entire chapters. And, sadly, *Before & After* has managed to blunt the cutting edge of contemporary Fantasy at first stroke.

Dedicated fans of Robert Rankin who cannot wait for their next fix of that author's elaborate lies could do a lot worse than this, but I think that Matthew Thomas makes for a poor second best.

Starburst rating

5

Tony Lee

Enchanter

by Sara Douglass

Published by Voyager

706pp £6.99 p/b

Originally published in Australia in 1996, *Enchanter*, the sequel to *Battleaxe* and Book Two of *The Axis Trilogy*, has just reached the UK. Sara Douglass may be from Oz, but her Fantasy owes more to Celtic and Greek mythology.

Axis SunSoar is now living with the winged Icaril Enchanters in Talon Spiks. He is learning about the Star Dance when he discovers that, impossibly, he already knows the magical songs. Did someone teach him as a baby, and if so, who? Uncertainty makes Axis suspicious and increasingly paranoid.

Axis is the StarMan of ancient prophecy and intends to reunite the warring races of the Acharies, Avar, and Icaril, and to restore the realm of Tencendor. Unfortunately, his two half-brothers (by different parents) have other plans. Borneheld has always resented his handsome, charismatic brother, and is further enraged by the fact his own wife, Faraday, loves Axis. The monstrous Gorgasael, meanwhile, has his own reasons for using the Dark Music to create fearsome supernatural creatures to fight Axis's forces.

7

Tony Lee



Separated from Faraday, whom he intends to eventually widow and then marry, Axis figures it should be possible to love two women at once (oh dear!). Azhure, a beautiful and talented archer, is pregnant by him before he starts wondering about those strange scars on her back. Already disconcerted by Azhure's ability to wield renegade Enchanter WolfStar's bow and to control his pack of hounds, when Axis learns that Azhure can also invoke the Dark Music, his paranoia drives him to do something he will deeply regret....

Read Book One of the trilogy first. I didn't and consequently encountered a steep learning curve in the information-dense early chapters (thank heavens for the glossary!). Fortunately, once up to speed, Enchanter proves absorbing, worth reading for the arrogant Icarion alone. Those who like their battles bloody and realistic will get their desire, but here also are moments of great tenderness (I loved the scenes where Axis and Azhure communicate telepathically with their baby Caelum) and anguish.

The third and final volume, *StarMan*, is due from Voyager soon.

Starburst Rating

7
Barbara Davies

The High House

by James Stoddard

Published by Earthlight

321pp £5.99 pb

In this quirky Fantasy, (written as a tribute to Lin Carter and the *Sign of the Unicorn* series he edited) all the action takes place indoors. But the doors and secret passages of Evermere are as likely to lead to fantastic lands as to the next room!

When young Carter Anderson loses the master keys to Evermere, he's unaware of the dire consequences, and soon after, he is sent away. Fourteen years elapse, and Carter's father, Lord Ashton Anderson, has been missing for 10 of them, before Carter returns to the house where he grew up. The keys are now in the hands of the Society of Anarchists, and Carter finds himself fighting the faceless being called the Bobby to enable his father's old retainers to continue winding Evermere's clocks and lighting its lamps – for such is the nature of the High House, these mundane tasks affect the Universe itself.

Helped by his younger half brother Duskin and by an amiable lawyer named William Hope ('Ashton', 'Hope' ... references to classic Fantasy writers recur), Carter resolves to recover the keys and make the house secure once more. But first he must locate his father's Lightning Sword and Tawny Mantle, which means a perilous journey to the mysterious Arkalen. Worst of all, he must face the terrors of the Room of Horrors.

Round Up

Science Fiction

Darwin's Radio Greg Bear

The Eclipse of the Century Jan Mark

Animorphs 15: The Escape K A Applegate

Huntress of the Sea Alan Temperley

Penumbra Eric Brown

Dead Romance Lawrence Miles

Six Moon Dance Sheri S Tepper

SF Masterworks 9: Gateway Frederik Pohl

SF Masterworks 10: The Rediscovery of Man Cordwainer Smith

HarperCollins, h/b

Scholastic, h/b

Scholastic, p/b

Scholastic, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Virgin, p/b

Voyager, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Fantasy

Broken Sky: Act 1 Part 4 Chris Wooding

Into the Darkness Harry Turtledove

Brotherhood of the Wolf David Farland, Book 2 of *The RuneLords*

Guenevere Rosalind Miles

Voice of the Demon Kate Jacoby, The second book of *Elita*

The Jackal of Nar John Marco, Book one of *Tyrants and Kings*

The Sum of All Men David Farland, Book one of *The RuneLords*

Stone and Sky Graham Edwards

Shards of a Broken Crown Raymond E Feist

Starman Sara Douglass, Book Three of *The Axis Trilogy*

III Met in Lankmar Fritz Leiber

Thraxas and the Warrior Monks Martin Scott

The Streets of the City Alison Spedding

Darwinia Robert Charles Wilson

The Children of Wrath Mickey Zucker Reichert

Scholastic, p/b

Earthlight, p/b

Earthlight, p/b

Simon & Schuster, h/b

Gollancz, h/b

Millennium, h/b

Earthlight, h/b

Voyager, p/b

Voyager, p/b

Voyager, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Orbit, p/b

Voyager, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Millennium, p/b

Horror

Genesis Mark Morris

Longbarrow Mark Morris

Others James Herbert

Point Horror: The Lifeguard Ritchie Tankersley Cusick

Point Horror: Beach House R L Stine

Point Horror: Beach Party R L Stine

Point Horror: Funhouse Diane Hoh

Goosebumps Series 2000: 8: Fright Camp R L Stine

The Unexplained: Stories of the Paranormal Ed Ric Alexander

Piatkus, h/b

Piatkus, p/b

Macmillan, h/b

Scholastic, p/b

Scholastic, p/b

Scholastic, p/b

Scholastic, p/b

Scholastic, p/b

Millennium, p/b

TV Tie-ins

The X-Files: Skin Ben Mazrich

Babylon 5: Deadly Relations: Bester Ascendant J Gregory Keyes

The Babylon File Volume 2 Andy Lane (unofficial guide to 4th & 5th seasons) Virgin, p/b

Voyager, h/b

Boxtree, p/b

Virgin, p/b

Film Tie-ins

Star Wars George Lucas, illustrated screenplay

The Empire Strikes Back Leigh Brackett and Lawrence Kasdan, illustrated screenplay

Return of the Jedi George Lucas and Lawrence Kasdan, illustrated screenplay

eXistenZ John Luther Novak, novelisation of the Cronenberg film

Virgin, h/b

Virgin, h/b

Virgin, h/b

Pocket Books, p/b

Other

Batman: Anarchy Graphic Novel

Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron: Requiem for a Rogue Graphic Novel

Spawn: Damnation Graphic Novel

Myth and Magic: The Complete Fantasy Reference Introduction by Terry Brooks

The Encyclopedia of Fantasy John Clute and John Grant

Titan, p/b

Titan, p/b

Titan, p/b

Orbit, p/b

Orbit, p/b



Top 20 Paperbacks



- 1 (1) **HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS**
J K Rowling Bloomsbury £3.99
- 2 (2) **HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE**
J K Rowling Bloomsbury £3.99
- 3 (-) **SHARDS OF A BROKEN CROWN**
R Feist Voyager £6.99
- 4 (4) **SHIP OF MAGIC**
R Hobb Voyager £6.99
- 5 (8) **KRONOR: THE BETRAYAL**
R Feist Voyager £10.99
- 6 (9) **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER WATCHER'S GUIDE**
Pocket £7.99
- 7 (3) **STAR WARS X-WING: SOLO COMMAND**
A Allston Bantam £5.99
- 8 (-) **BUFFY ANGEL CHRONICLES 2**
R T Cusick Pocket £4.99
- 9 (-) **ONE OF US**
M Marshall Smith HarperCollins £6.99
- 10 (5) **BEFORE AND AFTER**
M Thomas HarperCollins £5.99
- 11 (6) **MASTERHARPER OF PERM**
A McCaffrey Corgi £5.99
- 12 (7) **JINGO**
T Pratchett Corgi £5.99
- 13 (-) **THE GREEN MILE**
S King Orion £9.99
- 14 (17) **PURITY**
S Hutson Warner £5.99
- 15 (18) **ASSASSIN'S APPRENTICE**
R Hobb Voyager £6.99
- 16 (10) **MERLIN: THE OLD MAGIC**
J Mallory Voyager £5.99
- 17 (13) **WARRIOR KING**
C Bunch Orbit £9.99
- 18 (-) **THE HOBBIT**
J R R Tolkien Tolkien £5.99
- 19 (-) **THE COLOUR OF MAGIC**
T Pratchett Corgi £5.99
- 20 (-) **REMIX**
J Grimwood Earthlight £8.99

Top 10 Hardbacks



- 1 (-) **THE GIRL WHO LOVED TOM GORDON**
S King Hodder £12.99
- 2 (2) **THE MAD SHIP**
R Hobb Voyager £16.99
- 3 (1) **CARPE JUGULUM**
T Pratchett Doubleday £16.99
- 4 (4) **STAR WARS VISUAL DICTIONARY**
D West Reynolds Dorling Kindersley £12.99
- 5 (-) **THE MARTIANS**
K Stanley Robinson Voyager £16.99
- 6 (-) **VITTORIO**
A Rice Chatto £16.99
- 7 (3) **RAINBOW MARS**
L Niven Orbit £16.99
- 8 (7) **STAR TREK: INSURRECTION**
J M Dillard Pocket £9.99
- 9 (-) **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FANTASY**
J Clute & J Grant Orbit £19.99
- 10 (6) **BAG OF BONES**
Stephen King Hodder £16.99

Compiled for Starburst by
Bookwatch



James Stoddard's formal prose style lends an Edwardian atmosphere to the book that suits the storyline and setting perfectly. Unfortunately, the unconscious sexism of the period is also present in such characters as the adored mother and the coldly beautiful and manipulative stepmother. The High House itself is fascinating, and some of Stoddard's images are particularly striking – the dinosaur in the attic and the River of Endless Dark in the cellar to name but two – but he does tend to overdo loving descriptions of the architecture. An intriguing book. Well worth a look.

Starburst Rating

Barbara Davies

Mammoth: Book 1 Silverhair

by Stephen Baxter

Published by Millennium

277pp £16.99 h/b

There's a line spoken by Silverhair, the heroine of Stephen Baxter's latest book, that for me encapsulates an idea present in most SF: 'Maybe the old ways aren't the right ways any more.' And despite the blurb's claim that *Mammoth: Book 1* Silverhair is the first book in a 'Fantasy trilogy ... in the tradition of *Watership Down* and *Duncton Wood*', this really is more SF than Fantasy.

It's the present day and against the odds woolly mammoths have survived on an island off the northern coast of Siberia. The adolescent Silverhair is curious about 'the Lost' (the mammoth term for humans) and when she encounters one, her first thought is to befriend it. Unfortunately, he's a criminal stranded with his men on the island and not, it seems, a member of the WWF! Silverhair's family flees, but even crossing the supposedly impenetrable Mountains at the End of the World proves insufficient to evade the persistent humans. When all Silverhair's relatives have been either butchered or taken to captivity, it's up to her to perform the mammoth task (sorry, couldn't resist!) of rescuing them, something which will see her invoking the ancient pact between her kind and the creatures known as the Calves of Siros.

This rite-of-passage tale follows Silverhair's progress from naive adolescent to a worldly wise Matronarch about to have her first calf. Baxter favours an omniscient viewpoint, pulling back from the action to deliver little infodumps about mammoth biology, which sometimes distances the reader. Perhaps because of this, it takes a while for the book to grip, but by the second half reader sympathy is firmly engaged. The scenes in which Silverhair mates with the young bull Lop-ear, and in which she and her aunt Snagtooth face human cruelty first hand, are particularly moving.

Starburst Rating

Barbara Davies



The Avengers

Warner

Ralph Fiennes, Uma Thurman, Sean Connery; 86 minutes; screen ratio: 1.85:1

The Movie: The most critically mauled blockbuster of 1998 makes it to home cinema, and freed of its event movie trappings **The Avengers** plays like a TV episode on fast forward. Fiennes and Thurman are truly awful, and Jeremiah C's direction seems barely existent, but the outlandish production design and Sixties trappings keep you watching anyway.

The Extras: Scene access in 31 chapters (a bit excessive for an 86 minute film) and language options only. The effects and photography look great, but a little behind the scenes info on how they were achieved wouldn't have come amiss.

Highlights: Chapter 10 – *Two Bears Down* (Steed and Emma visit Wonderland Weather as the members of BROLLY meet. So *Avengers!*); 15 – *Bugs sent by Thugs* (Attack of the CGI-tastic insects)

Eraser

Warner

Arnold Schwarzenegger, James Caan, Vanessa Williams; 107 minutes; screen ratio: 2.35:1

The Movie: Arnie goes back to basics as John Kruger, a US Marshall who 'erases' the identities of those in the Witness Protection Programme. Oh, and he also gets to run around with Big Guns.

The Extras: Scene access in 44 chapters, cast bios, language options, and the surprisingly low key theatrical trailer. As with *Batman Forever*, high definition does the CGI effects no favours, as witnessed by the marauding alligators in chapter 25.

Highlights: Chapter 11 – *Lighting a Fuse* (Kruger sets an explosive trap); Chapter 21 – *Out in the Open* (the parachuting Arnie goes head to head with a 747)

From Dusk Till Dawn

Buena Vista

George Clooney, Quentin Tarantino, Juliette Lewis; 103 minutes; screen ratio: 1.85:1

The Movie: Clooney and Tarantino are brothers (no, really) making a break for Mexico after a bloody heist. Their destination: the Titty Twister, a bawdy bar frequented by creatures of the night. Fast, frantic, and frightening, *From Dusk Till Dawn* is nevertheless a very uneven movie, which survives the initial change in genre, only to suffer a very stagy middle section. It's worth persevering for the breathtaking climax, but all the same in script and style it's way, way behind tv's *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*.

The Extras: Scene access in 26 chapters; English and French subtitles and languages.

Highlights: Chapter 19 – *Sex Machine* (The bats break in to the Titty Twister); Chapter 22 – *Vampire Killers* (Clooney and co take on the vamps with makeshift defences)

David Richardson

Batman on disc

Batman

Warner

Michael Keaton, Jack Nicholson, Kim Basinger; 121 minutes; screen ratio: 1.85:1

The Movie: Ten years and two more Dark Knights have come and gone, but time has not dulled Tim Burton's definitive original. If anything, it underlines the weaknesses of Joel Schumacher's gaudy efforts: Keaton's Bruce Wayne is underplayed yet accessible, and Nicholson's Joker – the sole villain, and all the better for it – steals the show with some killer banter. When he delivers the punchlines he's not aiming for comedy. He's scary.

The Extras: The slickly-designed menu boasts scene access in 31 chapters, cast bios for all the principals, subtitles and some excellent production notes. Don't believe the sleeve, which insists that *Batman* is a full-screen release. It's nothing of the kind...

Highlights: Chapter 12 – *The Joker Chairs the Meeting* (Nicholson at his radiant best as the Joker fries a foe); Chapter 28 – *Batman and the Joker Head to Head* (the brilliant climax atop Gotham's Cathedral).

Batman Returns

Warner

Michael Keaton, Michelle Pfeiffer, Danny DeVito; 121 minutes; screen ratio: 1.85:1

The Movie: Forgetting the golden rule that less is more, the first *Batman* sequel boasts three villains (The Penguin, Catwoman, Max Shreck) but lacks the emotional core of the first movie. With Keaton sidelined by A-list stars, Pfeiffer is a fetishist's fantasy as the feline felon – even though it's obvious Burton is more enraptured by the waddling Oswald Cobblepot.

The Extras: Scene access in 39 chapters; incomplete cast bios (which for some reason, this time around exclude Pat Hingle) and subtitles. No great shakes, but the visuals look outstanding in their digital glory.

Highlights: Chapter 10 – *Catwoman is Born* (Selena Kyle goes barmy and runs up some DIY PVC gear); Chapter 19 – *'Life's a Bitch, Now so am I'* (Showdown between Batman and Catwoman on a *Mary Poppins*-esque rooftop)

Batman Forever

Warner

Val Kilmer, Chris O'Donnell, Jim Carrey, Tommy Lee Jones; 115 minutes; screen ratio: 1.85:1

The Movie: Joel Schumacher's symphony in green and purple is an assault on the senses, as Carrey and Jones attempt to over-act each other – and everyone else, for that matter – off the screen. Add in the requisite bangs, flashes and orchestra and the result is sheer sensory overkill.

The Extras: Scene access in 39 chapters; cast bios and subtitles. The pictures look terrific – so terrific, in fact, that some of the CGI effects lack credibility.

Highlights: Chapter 28 – *Intruders at Wayne Manor* (The Riddler blows up the Batcave); Chapter 34 – *Double Jeopardy* (The Riddler's scheme implodes)



To Rent



Blade (18)

Entertainment
Wesley Snipes, Stephen Dorff,
Kris Kristofferson

Move over Buffy Summers: there's a new slayer in town. Half-man, half-vampire, Blade's battle against the blood-sucking forces of darkness make Buffy's antics look like kids' stuff.

Unknown to the world's human population, the vampire elite operate in all levels of society. The only thing that stands between the blood-suckers and global domination is human-vampire hybrid Blade (Snipes). Imbued with the speed and strength of the undead but immune to their susceptibility to light, Blade wages a one-man war against the haemoglobin hunters, using a dazzling array of weapons designed by his grizzled assistant/mentor, Whistler (Kristofferson).

While on the trail of a vicious vampire overlord, Deacon Frost (Dorff), Blade discovers an elaborate plot to resurrect the 1,000 year old Vampire King, La Morgia. If Frost succeeds, he will unleash a crimson tide of death and destruction which will end in the destruction of Humanity.

From its breathtaking opening sequence to its hilarious Russian coda, *Blade* drips with heart-pounding scenes guaranteed to get the blood rushing. Director Stephen Norrington handles the razor-sharp action sequences, piercing soundtrack and cutting-edge effects brilliantly, and ensures that viewers are left on a knife edge throughout the movie.

David S Goyer's outstanding script not only captures the flavour of the original comic-strip, but balances the film's gloriously OTT antics with a biting sense of humour and an unusually effective degree of character development. Consequently, although *Blade* sometimes teeters on becoming ridiculous it never quite goes over the edge.

As the gun-toting, sword-wielding, judo-chopping Blade, Snipes makes one of the compelling comic-strip characters to hit the screen and successfully gives the enigmatic vampire hunter an underlying sense of humanity. Kristofferson is delight in the role of Whistler, although wimpy Dorff seems out of his depth as the supposedly terrifying Frost.

One of the most shamelessly enjoyable action-adventures of the year, *Blade* hits the jugular with its comic-strip capers.

Be sure to sink your teeth into it.

It's a wonderful knife: 17th May, rental



Blade (18)
Entertainment
See review panel

Blade Squad (15)
Warner

Cunningly – nay, desperately – released on the same day as the infinitely superior *Blade*, *Blade Squad* follows a futuristic band of jet-propelled rollerblading cops (*pur-leasel*) as they attempt to capture a murderous bank-robber. Kirk Balz heads a no-star cast in this cheap and cheerless ripping yarn, which is little more than a series of routine set-pieces. All in all, a hi-tech police drama which isn't much cop.

Butcher boys: 17th May

Children of the Corn IV: The Gathering (18)
Buena Vista

The third sequel inspired by the Stephen King short *Children of the Corn*, *The Gathering* yet again sees the unsuspecting youth of a small town being possessed by a powerful force of evil. Lacking as much as a grain of originality, Greg Spence's clichéd chiller is hardly the pick of the crop. But viewers looking for mindless mayhem and gruesome gore will reap the film's rewards.

Killing fields: 24th May

Cube (15)
Columbia TriStar

Six strangers must make their way out of a deadly high-tech maze in the SF thriller that proves it really is hip to be square! Low on budget but high on thrills and chills, *Cube* is an intriguing, inventive and utterly intoxicating blend of *The Crystal Maze* and *The Prisoner*, which boasts strong performances from the likes of *Deep Space Nine*'s Nicole deBoer. Don't be a block head – rent it today.

Six pack: 24th May

The Dentist 2 (18)
High Fliers

Just when you thought it was safe to visit your local tooth fairy, the world's deadliest dental surgeon is back! After escaping from mental hospital, Dr Alan Feinstone (Corbin Bernsen) begins a new life in Missouri as Jamie Devers. But once Alan lands a job at the local dental surgery, he embarks on a teeth-shattering reign of terror. Directed by Horror maestro Brian Yuzna (*Re-animator*), *The Dentist 2* offers a jaw-dropping prescription of gore and giggles which pulls out all the stops.

The tooth is out there: 5th May

'Blade drips with heart-pounding scenes guaranteed to get the blood rushing'



The Driller Killer (18)

Visual Film

Arguably the most notorious 'video nasty', *The Driller Killer* finally burrows its way onto VHS. Marking the directorial debut of Abel Ferrara (*Body Snatchers*, *The Addiction*), this groundbreaking shocker follows the exploits of Reno (Ferrara himself under a pseudonym), a failed artist who vents his frustration at society's injustice by taking up DIY – using the homeless for plasterboard! An uncompromising, unpleasant and deeply disturbing study of one man's descent into madness, *The Driller Killer* is a seriously hardcore Horror flick which makes *Scream* look like *Rugrats*. You have been warned.

A view to a drill: 24th May

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18)

CIC

Johnny Depp embarks upon the ultimate trip across America in Terry Gilliam's borderline Fantasy. Based on the cult novel by Hunter S Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* is a gloriously surreal cocktail of drugs, journalism and, erm, more drugs, which showcases Depp as his quirky best. Despite its painfully one-note premise, it's certainly worth a shot.

Drop out: 3rd May

Future Sport (15)

Columbia TriStar

In 2025, tension between the North American Alliance and the Hawaiian Liberation Organization reaches breaking point. The only chance of averting a full global conflict lies with a special game of *Future Sport* – a violent, hi-tech combination of basketball and skateboarding played with an electronically-charged ball. Former *Lola & Clark* star Dean Cain is at his macho best in this handsomely mounted and surprisingly effective small-screen update of *Rollerball*.

Match of the day: 10th May

The Hungers: The Swords (18)

Warner Vision

Terence Stamp introduces three tales of passion, desire and terror in the first video release from *The Hungers: The Series*. A young man becomes obsessed with learning the secrets of a showgirl's death-defying act in *The Swords*, a nurse and a handyman become embroiled in the twisted fantasies of an elderly woman in *Ménage à Trois*, while *Necros* focuses on a mysterious young lady believed to be the incubus of a withered old man. Super-stylishly shot but emotionally hollow, *The Hungers* is Tales of the Unexpected for the MTV generation.

Feeding time: 24th May

Antz

CIC

Voices: Woody Allen, Sharon Stone, Sylvester Stallone, Gene Hackman

An ordinary Ant embarks on an epic journey of discovery in the latest computer-animated feature film. Boasting over 1,200 state-of-the-art FX shots and the distinctive voices of an all-star cast, *Antz* is a small tale which strives to make a big impact on viewers.

Worker ant Z-4195 9 (Allen) grows tired of his mundane life and yearns for adventure. His dream comes true when he encounters another free-spirited drone, who captures his heart. Unfortunately, Z subsequently discovers that the new love of his life is actually Princess Bala (Stone), the future leader of the fascist ant colony, who is set to marry the evil General Mandible (Hackman).

In a desperate bid to share another moment with Bala, Z convinces a soldier ant, Weaver (Stallone), to swap places with him. But Z's plan soon goes awry when Weaver's platoon is sent to the centre of a warzone.

Following in the tradition of *Toy Story*, *Antz* is another visually-stunning computer-animated adventure. The film boasts some truly spectacular imagery, with the obvious highlights including the sweeping shot of 60,000 ants in the underground colony and the glorious *Starship Troopers*-inspired battle sequence.

However, while the movie's makers have obviously poured blood, sweat and tears over its visuals, *Antz*'s storyline has obviously been overlooked in the mix. After a promising start, the film proceeds to run out of steam very quickly, and begins to drag during its middle section. This problem becomes particularly acute when *Antz* is compared to Disney's insectoid computer-animated adventure, *A Bug's Life*, which spent more time in development and ultimately emerged as the superior movie. Plotting issues aside, though, there's still much to be savoured in *Antz*. Besides the awe-inspiring animation, the film is packed with memorable set-pieces and sassy dialogue, which is delivered beautifully by its all-star cast. Refreshingly, Allen's Angst-ridden schtick is at its lightest and most accessible, and Stallone puts in one of the best performances of his career as Weaver.

Short and lightweight it might be, but *Antz* remains a tiny treat. For the stunning visuals and the gags alone, it's well worth Z-ing.

Drone alive: 3rd May, £16.99



7+

'Despite its spectacular visuals, *Antz*'s lean storyline soon runs out of steam'

VIDEO FILE

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To Buy



Addams Family Reunion (PG)

Warner

They're creepy, they're kooky, they're altogether spooky... and now they've been re-cast for this made-for-video spin-off from the recent films. Tim Curry and Darryl Hannah replace the late Raul Julia and Angelica Huston as Gomez and Morticia, who this time out are shocked to learn that some of their relatives have embraced normal behaviour! Lacking the biting black comedy and imaginative scripting which defined its big screen predecessors, this is a cut-price caper which aims low and Lurches towards the target.

Family affair: 24th May, £12.99



Aeon Flux III: Operative Terminus (PG)

CIC

The Aeon Lady is back in the third collection of shorts from the cult MTV animated series. Featuring such archetypal Aeon adventures as *Utopia* or *Deutoria*, *The Demiurge*, *Ether Drift Theory*, *Operative Terminus* is a crowd-pleasing and utterly relentless 75-minute slice of 2000AD-style comic-strip adventure. Talk about Girl Power!

Aeon storm: 24th May, £8.99



Antz (PG)

CIC

See review panel on page 91

Babylon 5 - Vol 5.04 (PG)

Warner

Dr Franklin uncovers an alien holocaust, Lyta sheds some light on the Vorlons' legacy and G'Kar plays bodyguard in the latest tales from *Babylon 5*'s fifth season. Despite boasting some sparkling revelations about Lyta's genetic manipulation, *Secrets of the Soul* emerges as a painfully routine effort, thanks to the tedious moral debate between Franklin and the Hyak.

The following episode, *In the Kingdom of the Blind*, is equally trite, as Londo and G'Kar engage in the usual schtick while investigating the Centauri Regent's bizarre behaviour. Annoyingly unmemorable.

Out of sight: 17th May, £12.99

Dark City (15)

Entertainment

Wanted by the authorities for a series of crimes he has no recollection of committing, John Murdoch (Rufus Sewell) embarks on a desperate search for the reality of his situation in writer-director Alex Proyas's follow-up to *The Crow*. Its ambitions far exceed its reach, and it goes off the rails before the final reel, but *Dark City* remains a visually-inspired and refreshingly challenging SF mystery-thriller. Well worth a visit.

Mind war: 17th May, £14.99



Deep Impact (12)

CIC

A seven-mile wide comet is on a collision course with Earth and Bruce Willis is nowhere to be seen. It can only mean one thing: **Deep Impact**. Tee Leoni, Robert Duvall and Morgan Freeman head a strong ensemble cast in Mimi Leder's sophisticated disaster flick. Although it tries to juggle too many storylines and some of its scenarios fail to ring true (just look at Leoni's final scene), **Deep Impact** is a thought-provoking and emotionally-charged cocktail of hope, courage and compassion. Brace yourself.

Earth-shattering: 24th May, £14.99, £15.99 (w/s)

Fallen (15)

Warner

Detective John Hobbes (Denzel Washington) finds himself on the trail of a serial killer he's already captured – and seen die – in this superior blend of *The X-Files* and *Se7en*. Boasting a compelling central performance from Washington and deft direction from Gregory Hoblit, **Fallen** successfully breathes new life into the serial killer chiller.

The fall guy: 31st May, £12.99, £13.99 (w/s)

StarGate SG-1 - Vols 3 & 4 (12)

MGM

The StarGate SG-1 continues its whirlwind tour of the cosmos in the third and fourth double-bills from the show's first season.

A strange alien 'disease' transforms Jackson and Teal'c into Stone Age-style primitives in Volume 3's unmemorable opener, *The Broca Divide*, while O'Neill confronts a rogue SG leader in *The First Commandment*, a satisfying if wholly unoriginal tale.

Picking-up from the show's feature-length pilot, Volume 4 kicks off with *The Enemy Within*, a painfully routine offering which sees a SG-1 member possessed by a Goa-uld larvae. *StarGate* then becomes *BraGate* in the tape's concluding episode, *Emancipation*, as Amanda Carter struggles to bring sexual equality to an alien world. And no, I don't mean Hollywood. **Girls just want to have guns:** 24th May, £12.99 each

Tracking

In a move destined to disappoint *Starburst* readers across the land, Fox has postponed the eagerly-anticipated retail video debut of *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. Although two volumes of the hugely successful Horror-comedy series were due to stalk stores this month, Fox has now decided to push both tapes' release back to September-time. Talk about a pain in the neck!

On a brighter note, Fox has confirmed that the 13th X-Files offering will be unveiled on June 28th, and will comprise the pivotal sixth season two-parter, *Two Fathers and One Son*. Billed as the culmination of the show's long-running myth arc storyline, *File 13* finally X-poses the truth behind the alien conspiracy. See next issue for *Full Disclosure*.

Doctor Who collectors can now savour *Revenge of the Cybermen* in its full, unabridged glory, thanks to BBC Video's re-launch of the legendary Tom Baker adventure. Out now, this U-rated tape sells for £9.99 and is a welcome improvement on the original release.

Warner Home Video is inviting chill seekers to revisit the cobwebbed vaults of cinematic shockers with the launch of its new British Horror Classics series. The full range consists of 14 spine-tingling titles: *Quatermass and the Pit*, *Dracula - Prince of Darkness*, *Rasputin the Mad Monk*, *Horror of Frankenstein*, *Castle of Fu Manchu*, *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, *She: Vengeance of She*, *Frankenstein Created Woman*, *Blood of Fu Manchu*, *Devil Ship Pirates*, *The Beast Must Die*, *Devil Rides Out*, and *I, Monster*. Each tape bursts into stores on May 17th and sell for £5.99.

Best described as Mexico's answer to Terry Gilliam, Alejandro Jodorowsky is synonymous with startling visual imagery and intoxicating flights of fancy. May 3rd marks the launch of two vintage Jodorowsky offerings, *The Holy Mountain* and *El Topo* (both 18, £15.99 each, w/s). The former concerns a conspiracy to steal the secret of eternal life from the eponymous sacred hill, while the latter follows a gunslinger through a bizarre pseudo-religious odyssey. Divine lunacy indeed!

Video action star Jack Scalia attempts to rescue a group of young women from a futuristic mining facility in *Chained Heat 3: The Horror of Hell Mountain* (18, £10.99, out now). A post-apocalyptic tale of babes behind bars, this bargain basement production just about falls into the so-bad-it's-good category.

Star Trek: The Next Generation finally begins to hit its stride with CJC's latest releases from Season Two. Volume 2.3 (PG, May 3rd, £12.99) comprises three excellent instalments of the series, namely *Unnatural Selection*, *A Matter of Honor* and *The Measure of a Man*. The show continues to impress with Volume 2.4 (PG, May 24th, £12.99), which features *The Dauphin*, *Contagion* and *The Royale*. Speaking of the Enterprise crew, the ninth *Star Trek* film, *Insurrection*, is provisionally set to make its rental video debut on July 5th.

Sticking with the theme of rebellion, the war against the Federation continues in *Blake's 7 - Volume 17: Children of Aeon & Rumours of Death*, and *Volume 18 - Sarcophagus and Ultra World* (both PG TBC, May 3rd, £10.99 each).

Love is in the air in *Bugs - Episodes 5 & 6* (PG TBC, May 3rd, £12.99), which comprises the first season episodes *Shotgun Wedding* and *Stealth*. Fans of hi-tech hijinks should seek it out.

The latest *Myth Makers* release is a load of Tosh. Yes, that's right. *Myth Makers 44* (E, May 5th, £16.99) is indeed dedicated to the work of *Doctor Who* alumnus Donald Tosh.

Reeltime's other main release of the month is the *Mindgame Trilogy* (PG, May 3rd, £11.99). *Doctor Who*'s Sophie Aldred toplines this trio of Cube-style tales as a human soldier who inexplicably finds herself imprisoned with an equally bemused Sontaran and a Draconian.

Long before *Titanic*, James Cameron gained his sea legs with the swamping SF adventure *The Abyss*. Now viewers can take the plunge for £5.99, thanks to the film's re-release on 17th May. At that price, it makes a splashing purchase.

Next month's highlights include *The Mask of Zorro*, *Babe: Pig in the City* and *What Dreams May Come*. Till then, sweet dreams!



Star Trek: DSN - Vols 5.3 & 5.4 (PG TBC)
CIC

Deep Space Nine continues to serve as the last line of defence against the scum of the Gamma Quadrant in this pair of double-bills from the show's seventh season. Volume 7.3 begins with *Chrysalis*, a gentle romantic offering in which Dr Bashir becomes involved with one of his patients. *Treachery*, *Faith* and *The Great River* then sees Odo rushing to the aid of a defective defector, namely Weyoun, with engaging results. *Worf* attempts to give the legendary Klingon warrior Kor one last chance to die with honour in Volume 7.4's *Once More Unto the Breach*, an accomplished if rather familiar Klingon adventure. *The Siege of AR-558* then rounds off proceedings on a sombre note, as Sisko's Away Team become embroiled in a ground assault against the Jem'Hadar. A taut, gritty but clichéd war drama, it's DSN's answer to *Saving Private Ryan*. **Casualties of war: 3rd & 24th May, £13.99**

Star Trek: Voyager - Vols 5.3 & 5.4 (PG TBC)
CIC

Captain Janeway and crew face Time paradoxes, medical dilemmas and, erm, talking trees in this month's quartet of tales from the Delta Quadrant. Neelix adopts *Voyager*'s youngest crewmember following the disappearance of her mother in Volume 5.3's opening offering, *Once Upon a Time*, a potentially dire but surprisingly touching tale. *Voyager* then hits maximum warp in *Timeless*, the show's stunning 100th episode which sees a future version of Harry Kim attempting to prevent his shipmates' deaths. Exciting, compelling and thoroughly uplifting, *Timeless* is vintage *Star Trek*. Volume 5.4 opens with *Infinite Regress*, a low-key effort in which Seven of Nine suffers an identity crisis. The Doctor then has to take drastic action to save B'Elanna from a parasitic alien in *Nothing Human*. Despite boasting a superficial conclusion and one of the least convincing aliens of the year, *Nothing Human* remains an absorbing medical drama. **Future's end: 3rd & 24th May, £13.99**

David Bassom





In Dreams

Vangelis *Saratide* VSD-6001

Duration 48:46

The past year has been a successful one for Elliot Goldenthal, with his scores for *Sphere*, *Othello* and *The Butcher Boy* gaining deserved critical praise and in the case of *The Butcher Boy*, even an award. In *Dreams* sees Goldenthal re-unite with director Neil Jordan for the fourth time to produce a customary effective piece, one that could be seen as a summation of his work to date, both for Jordan and others. As such it doesn't offer any radically new pursuits, just continuations and experimentation with previous styles, be it *Heat*'s churning, multi-layered guitars or the raspy insidious saxophone of *The Butcher Boy*. Still, even at this level Goldenthal is far better than a fair percentage of composers, always finding a way to emphasize a film's central element's and permeate them with the necessary colouring. In *Dreams* also proves a perfect example of Goldenthal's humorous penchant for portentous titles hence track 1, *Agitato Dolosa*. Straight away we know we're in Goldenthal country, with at first a string quartet weaving its way through an atonal waltz-like march, before the orchestra and guitar gather up the momentum. Elsewhere there are some delicate, elegiac cues for piano and cello on tracks such as *Claire's Nocturne* and *Andante*. Whereas, tracks such as *Appellatron* and *Scytheplicity*, adopt Goldenthal's more raucous approach with a mixture of ascending guitars, that devilish waltz of earlier and tortured Sax solo's, all complimented by orchestra and a



menacing sound design. Rounding off the CD is *Dream Baby*, a gorgeous lullaby written by Goldenthal and Jordan.

8mm

Sliva Screen *FILMCD* 313

Duration 56:09

Michael Danna may be a name new to the genre, but he has long excelled in creating some outstanding scores, with *8MM* being no exception, indeed far superior to its celluloid carrier. Danna, has like many others in recent years, been incorporating various ethnic instrumentation into his palette. However, unlike many, Danna shows sensitivity and understanding towards this choice, letting the instruments influence and not just colour his more 'traditional' writing. It is here that *8MM* shines, in its superlative blending of orchestral scoring and world music, in this case an ensemble of African and Arabic instruments. The music serves to function as a siren call, reeling us in with a seductive mournfulness expressed through piano and Ney flute, on tracks such as *The Call* and *The Film*. Gradually the score builds up in intensity as the call leads us to hell, here the music becomes a whirlpool of aggression and danger as conspiring elements of rhythm and melody circulate amongst each other. A prime example being *Rainstorm*, patterns are laid down by the drums, Arabic woodwinds and taut strings, playing off one another, until the cue explodes with the strings now adopting an Arabic harmony to counterpoint the frenetic drumming. Excellent stuff, that will undoubtedly remain one of the year's best.

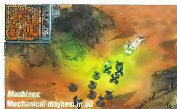
Dave White

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Machines

Publisher: Acclaim

Price: £39.99, PC

Every now and again a game comes along that stands out from the crowd. **Machines** is a war game, a little like **Command and Conquer** in concept, but the sensational graphics lets it take the gameplay further. You need a 3D-accelerator card to play the game because the graphics are rendered in realtime.

The objective is to destroy the enemy by constructing factories and research buildings to create powerful war machines. Resources are limited so you have to track down mineral supplies and mine them to build new machines and buildings. Meanwhile somewhere else on the landscape your enemy is doing exactly the same. Your machines have three levels of initiative, the highest setting will allow them to run after enemies and attack them, and the lowest makes them docile and will only attack if provoked. Alternatively if you want to do the job yourself you can jump into the cockpit and control any machine.

While there are so many other games with similar plots, not one of them approaches the quality and detail in terms of meaty visuals. Buildings and vehicles are extremely detailed and smoothly animated, and landscapes are moulded from realistic looking textures that can be viewed from any camera angle. With numerous missions, new technology to uncover, and the slickest graphics yet, this is probably the best game so far this year.



Silver

Publisher: Intergames

Price: £39.99, Playstation

There are some very advanced games for the Playstation, but this isn't one of them. It's the same sort of thing as **Machines**, but it doesn't use the 3D capabilities of the Playstation. One good thing about this game is that it gives you the option to play alone with two other enemies controlled by the computer. This makes the game more interesting, and if you're really good at it you can play the two computer enemies off against each other. **Krossfire** is quite playable but is let down by its graphics.

Silver

Publisher: Intergames

Price: £34.99, PC

Silver takes place a couple of hundred years ago where brave men fought with swords and fair damsels were in abundance. Unfortunately an evil sorcerer has taken all of the women by force to an unknown destination, and that includes your wife! Setting off with your grandfather, you begin an adventure to find the women of your town. Along the way you find mystical beings, henchmen, and the occasional nice person who wants to help you.

The backdrops are beautifully drawn and scroll around very smoothly, while the characters are in 3D and rendered in real time to achieve a flowing motion. **Silver** is an absorbing and intuitive adventure that's delightful to play for hours and hours.

Gary Fenton



'While there are so many other games with similar plots, not one of them approaches the quality and detail in terms of meaty visuals'

For links to the reviewed web sites check out the **CyberTech** page at www.vismag.com/starburst/cybertech.htm

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"Social interaction' at the cinema means having to listen to the people nearby gabbling loudly while gobbling their way even more loudly through tons of crisps'

A FEW weeks ago I dropped in to have a chat with Gary Kurtz, as you do, and while waiting in his office I noticed an Oscar sitting on a shelf. I was tempted to pick it up for a closer look (well, actually I wanted to fondle it) but decided not to. I could easily imagine the thing coming apart in my hands and I'd find myself in a situation similar to the one in a recent episode of *Frasier* where he managed to destroy a whole host of precious objects in a VIP's office. So Mr Kurtz's Oscar remains intact... When he arrived I produced a copy of *Starburst* #25 which contained an interview with him by yours truly (that's a mere 19 years and 225 issues ago). I wasn't sure if Kurtz would appreciate seeing a reminder of himself from all those years ago but he seemed quite pleased and even went off to photocopy the piece for his records.

During our latest conversation the subject of the late Stanley Kubrick naturally came up. There are certain similarities between the two — both are American film-makers who chose to make the UK their home, and both have surnames that begin with the letters 'KU' (which, when reversed, spell 'UK' — very Mulderish, eh?). But otherwise they were very different. For example, Kurtz described watching movies with Kubrick in Kubrick's private screening room at his St Albans mansion: 'I said to him, 'Stanley, watching movies this way is great; sure, your sound and picture are perfect and sometimes in a commercial cinema the picture is out of focus and the speaker balance isn't right, but you've got 500 other people in there with you while you're watching and you need that.' I'm a big fan of social interaction at the cinema. I don't like watching films on TV or on video, I'd much prefer to go to the cinema.' I understand what Kurtz means and sometimes it is better to watch a movie with an audience but often 'social interaction' at the cinema means having to listen to the people nearby gabbling loudly while gobbling their way even more loudly through tons of crisps. I bet no one ever dared open a packet of crisps in Stanley K's private screening room — if they did he probably had a button to push that would send 50,000 volts through their chair.

Fava beans and Chianti, anyone?

I hear that Thomas Harris has finally delivered the manuscript of the third Hannibal Lecter novel to his publishers (why don't they buy him a word processor?) and once again there's talk of Anthony Hopkins, Jodie Foster and Jonathan Demme teaming up for the movie. But hang on, didn't Hopkins announce his retirement from acting a few months back? If so, who will fill Lecter's blood-soaked shoes? It's got to be another Brit because that's the tradition. We had a Scot-Brit with Brian Cox in *Manhunter*, a Welsh-Brit in *Silence*... so

why not an Anglo-Brit this time? Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the it's *Only a Movie* choice for the new Hannibal Lecter — Hugh Grant

Hey, stop it. I'm serious. He'd be perfect. Just take a look at those teeth... And still being serious, I read an interview with Brian Cox recently in which he gave his opinion on his version of Lecter compared to Hopkins: '... the difference between Anthony Hopkins performance and my performance is that Tony Hopkins is mad and I am insane! And I know exactly what he means.

And speaking of great Horror writers I caught a glimpse of my old sparring partner James Herbert on Channel 4's *The Big Breakfast* recently. Jim fitted into the show quite well, laughing at Johnny Vaughn's jokes almost as skilfully as all those other people there who are paid to do it. Anyway, zany, thigh-slapping Johnny was interviewing Jim about writing and Jim said something rather profound: he said, 'You get better as you improve.' Or it might have been, 'You improve as you get better.' But either way round it's equally profound and I've written it up (both versions) in big letters on my noticeboard as a source of inspiration.

A reader's request

And now, as promised last column, the concise addenda to my classic book, *James Bond in the Cinema*, as requested by overwhelming reader demand (well, one reader). The 2nd edition ended with *Moonraker* so you can cut this paragraph out and stick it in your valuable copy, thus increasing its value by, whew, maybe a whole 50p: **For Your Eyes Only** — Roger Moore as Bond, great action sequences, attractive but vacuous leading lady, supporting villains okay, chief villain forgettable... er, that's it; **Octopussy** — crap. Roger Moore as Bond, crap plot, crap leading lady, crap villains; **A View to a Kill** — Roger Moore as Bond, great airship, some good action sequences, att but vac leading lady. Grace Jones and Christopher Walken wasted as villains, poor plot; **The Living Daylights** — Dalton good as Bond, good leading lady, supporting villain good, main villains not, plot all over the place like a mad woman's knitting; **License to Kill** — Dalton good as Bond, good leading lady, okay villain, good action sequences, fair plot; **Goldeneye** — Brosnan okay as Bond, okay leading lady, supporting villains good, main villain fair, good action sequences, fair plot; and **Tomorrow Never Dies** — Brosnan still okay, leading lady fair, supporting villains good, main villain sort of okay — just, good action sequences, but they've got that woman back knitting the plot.

So there you are. Watch this space for the verdict on *The World Is Not Enough*. In the meantime, just keep saying to yourself: 'You get better as you improve.'

John Brosnan

Tomorrow Never Dies



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